

EAST EUROPE

A Monthly Review of East European Affairs

SOCIAL INSURANCE PROGRAMS

An analytical survey of Communism's much-touted social security programs—family allowances, health benefits, old-age pensions—showing how these progressive institutions are used to serve the ends of the total State.

HUNGARIANS IN TIBET

Tibet examined through the eyes of a Hungarian Communist intellectual, aware from his own country's experience that foreign overlords may be brutal masters.

THEATER IN THE SOVIET BLOC

The continuing struggle between art and formula in the theaters of the Soviet bloc, where Party cultural controls have weakened and Western influences have grown.

A NEW ROAD FOR POLAND'S FARMERS?

Gomulka's formula: between collectivism and the horse.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

Bela Kovacs dead. Soviet-style agricultural reforms in Czechoslovakia. Factional strife in Bulgaria. Resumption of the anti-Tito campaign. Khrushchev in Poland.

TEXTS AND DOCUMENTS

Soviet-bloc foreign policy statements on the question of Germany and a proposed "peace zone" in the Balkans.

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EAST EUROPE is a monthly review of political, economic, social and intellectual trends and events in the Soviet orbit. Information contained in this magazine is derived in the main from East European sources and is based on a thorough analysis by specialists from Central and East European countries of all major Communist newspapers and publications and the complete monitoring of Communist broadcasts.

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The Month in Review

WHEN, ON JULY 14, Soviet Premier and Party leader Khrushchev was welcomed in Warsaw by Polish Party leader Gomulka, many observers noted the irony of the occasion. The flowery speeches by host and guest, protesting the extremes of mutual admiration and devotion ("Long live our dear Soviet guests," ended Gomulka; "Dear Comrade Gomulka," began Khrushchev), were in vivid contrast to Khrushchev's last Warsaw visit, during the tumultuous 'October Days' of 1956. It was then that the Soviet leader stormed into Warsaw bent on demolishing the newly-formed government of Gomulka, "that traitor" as he reportedly called him. But the ironies go much deeper and the contrasts are more complex than the simple juxtaposition of Khrushchev's two entrances. Most striking is the fact that three weeks before Khrushchev's arrival, Gomulka announced a new program for Polish agriculture which still sets it quite apart from the orthodox road of collectivization as practiced in the USSR.

The new Polish plan for the countryside seems to be that rarest bird in the exotic aviary of Soviet-bloc planning, a tactical scheme based on the realities-as-they-are, designed for maximum productive efficiency and paying only required lip-service to the shibboleths of "Marxist" political ideology. Its aim is to increase the mechanization of Polish agriculture, to reduce peasant dependence on three million inefficient and grain-consuming horses and to move toward the more intensive agriculture that the machine makes possible. These aims, indeed, would be perfectly consistent with the forced collectivization that has been the norm elsewhere in the bloc. The Polish planners, however, eschewing the hated kolkhoz, have seized upon the so-called peasants' circles—voluntary associations of farmers for mutual help, purchase of machines, etc., an institution dating from before the war—as their tool to advance agriculture. It is the circles which are to be direct beneficiaries of the new system in which the State turns back to agriculture the net revenues derived from compulsory deliveries to the State at prices below those in the free market. The circles will use this money for the development of agriculture, primarily the purchase of machinery, to be used by non-members as well as those who belong. There are various economic incentives to entice members; it is also possible that the voluntary nature of the circles may be compromised. The circles will be supervised by local organs of government and, of course, the Party.

No one is more suspicious (or has been given by history more cause for suspicion) than the peasant, and there have already been reports that the Polish peasants fear the regime is using the agricultural circles as the stalking horses of collectivization. There have also been newspaper stories that fictitious "paper" circles are springing up as a product of peasant reluctance in face of the regime's campaign. And, indeed, there is no doubt that a subsidiary aim of the new agricultural program is to accustom the peasant to a degree of collective ownership and cooperative action. Nevertheless, it seems clear that for the immediate future, perhaps through 1965, when compulsory deliveries will be abolished and there will presumably be further agricultural reorganizations, the regime intends to follow its own, unique, pragmatic road in the countryside.

The contrast of the Polish example in agriculture recently stirred some rare public intra-bloc criticism in Hungary, which shared with Poland a near-collapse of col-



lectivization in 1956, but which has recently staged an extensive and partially successful drive to push the peasants back into kolkhozes. The Hungarian economic weekly *Figyelo* recently spoke of Polish agriculture as "backward," full of "peculiarities" and replete with "remnants from the capitalistic past." These statements served as warnings to the Hungarian regime's own peasants; there have been many reports recently that farmers who were forced into collectives in the recent drive are engaging in passive resistance, refusing to get on with the actualities of collectivization despite their previous commitment, under pressure, to do so.

In the same month as the announcement of the Polish reforms came a Czechoslovak Party decree ordering a complex series of changes in Czechoslovak agriculture following Soviet trends. Although the detested compulsory delivery system is to be abolished and a single system of State purchase prices to be established, the whole tenor of the decree is to increase pressure on the peasants, already largely collectivized, at the sacrifice of their own consumption; private plots, for example, are now to be considered along with the collective lands when delivery contracts are computed. The trend of the change is a reorganization of farmers' incomes corresponding to the tightening of norms in industry.

A further irony links the Polish agricultural changes to the other major development of the month, the resumption of the anti-Yugoslav campaign. For indeed—and it must be a difficult mouthful to swallow for those orthodox Communists who are currently loud in their denunciations of Yugoslav revisionism—the new Polish measures bear a marked resemblance to the Yugoslav system established two years ago, in which peasants are also invited (but not forced) to join loose, semi-autonomous cooperative groups sharing machinery and other agricultural aids.

The resumption of the anti-Yugoslav campaign comes after a brief hiatus during Khrushchev's trip to Albania, tied to the Soviet propaganda drive for a Balkan "peace zone" aimed primarily at Greece and Italy; Yugoslav support for this drive was cited, the anti-Yugoslav trumpets momentarily muted and a note of near-cordiality toward Tito appeared. But that transient moment has passed and the pack is again in cry at Tito's "revisionism."

Indeed, Yugoslav agriculture particularly, as well as the rest of the "revisionist" economy, seems to be the focus of criticism by orthodox Communists in recent weeks, and this, the Yugoslavs complain, despite agricultural successes which make it possible for the first time in years to suspend imports of grain. Radio Belgrade, July 11, said: "Only the press of the Socialist countries—with the exception of Poland, which has published a number of items on our harvest—has passed in silence over the fact that Yugoslavia will no longer have to import wheat, as well as the record increase in Yugoslavia's industrial production."

For the Yugoslavs, perhaps the bitterest irony was the July 9 celebration of the sixteenth anniversary of the Communist Albanian Army, when an Albanian General took pains to write in the Party paper: "Our army is struggling against the plans of the imperialists and the Yugoslav revisionists." It was, of course, overwhelmingly due to the present Yugoslav leaders—now damned as revisionists and equated with "imperialists"—that the Albanian Communists first established their armed forces in the war years.

And the period's saddest irony and complexity: the death on June 21 of Bela Kovacs, former head of the Hungarian Smallholders' Party, victor over the Communists in the postwar election, former Soviet prisoner and briefly a Minister in the Revolt Government of Imre Nagy in 1956. Just a week before his death, the Hungarian Party paper had printed an "interview" with him in which he was alleged to have abandoned his life-long opposition to agricultural collectivization. Less than two weeks after his death, a Budapest daily printed a reminiscence of Kovacs by a self-styled friend, which recast Kovacs' part in the Revolt as that of someone who had supported "Soviet-Hungarian Friendship"—a euphemism for Soviet tanks in the streets of Budapest—and the "leadership" of the puppet traitor Janos Kadar.

Social Insurance Programs In Eastern Europe

One of the proudest boasts of the Communist regimes has been their social welfare programs. Officially designed to protect their citizens against the physical and economic problems of sickness and old age, in practice social insurance has become a means of discrimination against those classes which continue to resist "Socialization." This article examines in some detail social insurance coverage in Czechoslovakia, a country which has long had one of the most comprehensive systems in Eastern Europe. A second article will deal with the other (four) Soviet-bloc nations.

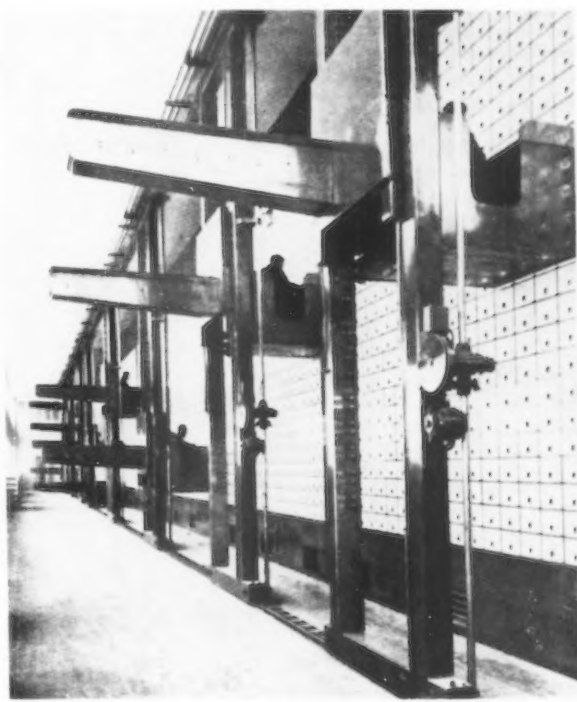
"All citizens shall be entitled to medical care and to provision in old age, incapacity for work and loss of livelihood. Women shall be entitled to special care in the event of pregnancy and maternity, children and young persons shall be entitled to all facilities for a full physical and mental development. These rights shall be secured by the Acts relating to national insurance, as well as by the public health and welfare services."

THIS STATEMENT from Section 29 of the Czechoslovak Constitution of May 9, 1948, clearly sets forth the ideals of the "social welfare State." By embodying these principles in the Constitution itself the Communist leaders underlined the fact that social security in the "Socialist State" is not something which the workers theoretically have to win for themselves in the form of concessions wrested from the employers or the government; on the contrary, all Communist regimes have made the social insurance programs a cornerstone of the "Socialist" order. In fact, even by comparison with those Western nations such as Sweden, Belgium and Great Britain which have generous health and pension insurance benefits, the East European countries do not, at first sight, seem to be lagging behind, and compared with the vast majority of non-Communist nations, they are, on paper at any rate, in the vanguard of social welfare legislation.

There is, however, a wide gap between the promise and the fulfillment, between the laws as they exist on paper and their application. What appears as legislation enacted to create a comprehensive social insurance system for "all citizens" has become a means of coercing all citizens into accepting the Communist definition of a "Socialist society"; those excluded from this society have, in turn, been excluded from the benefits provided by such a State.

The laws governing social insurance do not aim solely at guarding the individual against the loss of his capacity to earn a living, but also serve the authorities as political

tools with which to hasten the advance of "Socialism"; specifically, social welfare legislation in Eastern Europe has been used to combat absenteeism, increase production, force the independent farmers into collectives, the self-employed artisans or tradesmen into a nationalized economic system, and, most dramatically, to liquidate "enemies of the State" and reward loyal Party workers.



An enormous central records room of the Czechoslovak national insurance agency; electric lifts hoist clerks past the rows of file drawers.

Czechoslovak Life (Prague), February 1957



"Pensioners and their dependents are entitled to free medical and dental care. This is a dental department in a Prague health center." Photo and caption from the English-language propaganda monthly *Czechoslovak Life* (Prague), February 1957.

The pattern throughout the Communist bloc is the same. Health Insurance is often denied to self-employed persons and independent farmers; Social Security benefits for those working in the private sector of the economy are less than for employees in "Socialized" organizations and on collective farms. The result of such discriminatory policies is that entire segments of the population have been excluded not only from Health Insurance and certain other social insurance benefits, but also from the claim to free medical care. Indeed, the differences in the scope of the insurance and in the benefits exist not only between the "victorious" class and the remainder of the population, but even within the ranks of the "proletarian vanguard" itself.

Social insurance programs in the non-Communist world generally fall into five categories: Social Security (old-age pensions), Disability and Survivors' Insurance; Health and Maternity Insurance (which usually includes both cash benefits and medical care); Unemployment Insurance; Family Allowances; and Work-Injuries (or Accident) Insurance. The East European countries also provide insurance programs in these categories, with the sole exception of unemployment benefits.

In the West, the most common method of financing pensions, when these are provided through social insurance, is through a tripartite system of contributions paid by the

insured persons, employers and the government. In Eastern Europe, on the other hand, contributions derive entirely from the employer,* except in the cases of self-employed persons and collective farmers. Generally, the contributions are paid directly to the State and the benefits extended are incorporated in the national budget under the heading, "Social and Cultural Expenditures." It is therefore virtually impossible to make any comparison between the amounts of the contributions and the expenditures in the form of direct or of indirect cash benefits. There is ample evidence, however, that social insurance expenditures have increased in recent years as the coverage has extended to include more and more of the working population; in Czechoslovakia, for example, social insurance expenditures rose from 16 billion *koruny* in 1957 (*Statistická Rocenka* [Prague], 1958) to 22.1 billion planned for 1959 (*Prace* [Prague], April 16), or from 16.3 percent to 23 percent of the national budget.

Czechoslovakia

CZECHOSLOVAKIA, under both the Republic and the Communist regime, has had one of the most highly-developed and comprehensive social insurance programs in Europe. By analyzing in some detail the present system of contributions and benefits which not only rewards the "deserving employee," but also forces the independent artisan and peasant to accept an ever-higher degree of State control, it is possible to determine in large part the matrix for all the social insurance programs instituted in the bloc.

The First Republic (1918-1938)

BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS the Czechoslovak Republic established a system of compulsory social insurance covering all wage earners against the risks of sickness, maternity, disability, old age and death, as well as against industrial accidents and occupational diseases; special, autonomous institutions existed for each particular coverage. The economic principle behind the collection and distribution of social insurance funds during this period was that of actuarial risk, with the contributions of the insured graduated according to expected claims. (Under the Communist system, benefits depend on the amount allocated in the State budget, and claims are graduated according to the type of work performed and the length of uninterrupted employment.)

In the prewar Republic compulsory Health Insurance was provided for all regular, full-time employees, with special provisions made for employees in civil service. Contributions of the insured persons were not to exceed 5.5 percent of the daily wage (maximum payment—2.0 *koruny*); employee contributions were matched by the employer. Health benefits included medical treatment, financial help, maternity assistance and funeral benefits. Daily sickness benefits ranged from 2.50 to 18 *koruny*

* This can mean the State (either directly or as a "Socialist enterprise") or, as discussed below, a private employer.

graduated according to the amount of the contribution. In 1934, the average number of persons subject to compulsory Health Insurance was 2,051,515; the average monthly wage for factory workers was approximately 700 *koruny*. (*Statistická Rocenka*, 1934.)

Workers' Social Security and Disability Insurance was based on a similar ruling. The weekly contribution was between 2.60 and 8.40 *koruny*, divided equally between employer and employee; the benefits consisted of an annual sum of 550 *koruny* with weekly supplements, graduated according to the amount of the contribution, ranging from 0.60 to 1.75 *koruny*. To qualify for an old-age pension the insured person had to attain the age of 65 years and, if employed, was not permitted to earn more than 50 percent of what a healthy employee doing similar work earned. Disability benefits were provided for those employees "who due to sickness or other physical or mental defects are unable to earn at least one-third of what a . . . healthy employee . . . usually earns." (*Collection of Laws*, Act No. 221, October 9, 1924.) In this group the number of insured in 1934 averaged 1,681,130 persons.

For certain other employees, such as actors, editors, office workers, skilled workers (draftsmen, lithographers, etc.), a separate pension plan was in effect. The assessable ceiling rose to 42,000 *koruny* per year and monthly contributions ranged from 12 to 250 *koruny*, with the employer and employee each contributing half. Old-age and disability benefits included a basic sum of 3,600 *koruny* per year with additional weekly supplements of from 2 to 50 *koruny* according to the amount of the premium. The average number of participants in this program in 1934 was 360,000.

Miners' Health and Old-Age Insurance was organized in a fashion similar to the workers' insurance, although the benefits were substantially higher and included educational allowances for the children and a cost-of-living adjustment.

Accident Insurance covering workers and plant clerks

employed in factories, mines, quarries and other enterprises had existed in one form or another since 1887. Each enterprise was placed in a separate category depending on the degree of work hazard. The amount of the benefit depended on the measure of the disability and could reach a maximum of two-thirds of the last year's earnings, limited to two-thirds of 12,000 *koruny*. If the accident resulted in death, the survivors were entitled to a funeral benefit of 900 *koruny*, and the widow could receive 20 percent of the annual earnings of her dead husband until her own death or re-marriage.

Comparison with Communist System

THE PRIMARY CONCEPTUAL change in the post-1948 social insurance programs consists in the manner in which the costs of the insurance are covered. As stated previously, under the First Republic the system was self-supporting and run on actuarial principles. Under the present regime, the State meets the claims out of its total revenue. An article in the law review, *Pravnik* (Prague), No. 8, 1957, described the "Socialist" application of social insurance as follows:

"Our . . . insurance is based on Socialist principles . . . not on a distribution system [Ed.: equilibrium between revenue and expenditure], but on a system of State insurance. The insurance can no longer be immediately influenced by fluctuations in the value of the currency. . . . As the contributions now finally flow into the State budget and the benefits in the last instance are paid out of the State budget, it is not necessary to build capital reserves, and the expenditures cease to be dependent on the revenue of those who operate the . . . insurance."

In the practical result of this change, however, the premiums paid were often lower in prewar Czechoslovakia than under the Communist regime. For example, although contributions to Health Insurance in prewar days varied from fund to fund, the average contribution for workers was



At a trade union winter vacation resort in the Beskydy Mts., Czechoslovakia. The two women at right are a foreman and a seamstress at a "large clothing factory in Prague." The text explains that since their shop "was frequently rewarded for best performance in the factory," they were chosen by the trade union for the free vacation.



Czechoslovak Trade Unions (Prague), No. 2, 1959

approximately 5.3 percent of the insured's wages, and in the case of employees in civil service, less than 2 percent. Although today all employee contributions are paid by the employer, from 1948 to 1953 the law provided that half of the contributions for the social insurance programs would be paid by the employer, half by the employee. At the same time a so-called Wage Tax amounting to 8 percent of the employee's earnings was deducted from the worker's salary; out of this tax came the employee contribution for Health Insurance. (*Rude Pravo* [Prague], February 19, 1953.)

After 1953, employee contributions were officially abolished, although the Wage Tax has never been rescinded.* Now, all contributions are technically paid by the employer, although they may also derive from indirect taxes such as the "turnover tax" (i.e. sales tax) which falls most heavily on the consumer. Only self-employed persons, collective and independent farmers pay social insurance contributions as such.

The primary shortcomings of the insurance programs under the First Republic were the lack of unemployment insurance** and the multiplicity of autonomous social insurance institutions; without a more centralized administration for social insurance, the costs of the various programs were probably higher than those in a unified insurance system. A gradual trend toward centralization was evident during the late thirties, but all improvement ended abruptly with the German occupation.

"National Insurance"

IN THE THREE SHORT postwar years (1945-1947) which preceded the Communist take-over, the social insurance programs which had existed before the war were not drastically changed, but rather modified to keep pace with the valuation of the currency after 1945; the most significant advance in coverage during this period was the introduction of Family Allowances for all children of employees. A number of reforms were drawn up after a close study of the British and Scandinavian social welfare programs, but the Communist *coup* in February 1948 prevented the Constituent Assembly from adopting these recommendations.

When social insurance was first introduced by the Communist regime, it was called "National Insurance." This title was used to underline the ostensibly democratic goal of the social welfare program, in which "all citizens" would be entitled "to medical care and to provision in old age, incapacity for work, and loss of livelihood." At this time the State promised that social insurance would also cover "individuals engaged in independent, gainful activity . . . and the members of their family who work with them. . . . It is assumed that the new insurance will undoubtedly cover close to 95 percent or even more of the citizens." (J. Gallas, *The National Insurance Act* [Prague], 1948.)

*The Wage Tax in 1952 was pegged at 8 percent of the worker's salary; by 1954, increases had raised this amount by between 35 and 60 percent of the original tax for certain categories of employees. (*Collection of Laws, Act. No. 112, December 18, 1953.*)

** Workers who were members of trade unions were paid unemployment compensation by them.



A home for the aged in southern Moravia.

Czechoslovak Life (Prague), February 1957

The new program was to take effect in three stages: in July 1948, all social insurance institutions were to merge into the Central National Insurance Institute; in October 1948, Pension Insurance was to cover all categories of working persons, although Health Insurance was to cover only "employees" and pensioners; in July 1950, Health Insurance was to be extended to cover self-employed persons such as independent farmers and tradesmen and their families. This last stage never materialized.

Period of Transition

Benefits to those strata of the population who were covered increased from 5.2 billion *koruny* in 1948 to 12.9 billion in 1956. (*Statistická Rocenka*, 1958.) Employee contributions were eliminated, except insofar as they were included in the Wage Tax. As stated earlier, total benefits have been in inverse proportion to the number of self-employed workers and independent farmers.

One of the most effective weapons wielded against those remnants of the population who continued to resist "Socialization" were the rules governing free medical care and Health Insurance. Independent farmers and members of their families employed by them as well as self-employed persons and their families were forced to pay the costs of examination and treatment both at home and in medical institutions out of their own pockets (*Lidova Demokracie* [Prague], October 15, 1955); they were also denied Family Allowances.

For those workers who were allowed Health Insurance, the organization which determined who might qualify for benefits under the law was the Central Trade Union Council, which in turn delegated administrative responsibility to the trade union organizations in the enterprise. The advantage of such decentralization was to enable the Communist-run trade unions to keep a closer watch over the workers, combat absenteeism and a high labor turnover, and provide health benefits only for those "honest workers . . . who observe State and Trade Union discipline." (*Rude Pravo*, June 11, 1953.)

"Absenteeism and labor turnover will be affected by a reduction in [health] benefits, so that a worker will think

twice before switching from plant to plant, and will be aware that if he arbitrarily leaves his job his claims against the Health Insurance will be lower than before. Health Insurance . . . will be organized in such a way as to award the deserving workers higher claims than the malingerers and shirkers. And those who do not observe but violate work discipline will be awarded smaller claims." (*Prace*, April 15, 1953.)

In order to make sure that the worker claiming health benefits was not using the cash received to supplement income derived from other sources outside his regular job, "comradely visits" by members of the plant Health Insurance Commission were paid to the home of the employee collecting sickness benefits. This system ran into difficulties, however, whenever the investigator refused to expose a fellow worker:

"It is no rare occurrence that in making the [comradely] visit the comrades find that the patient does not observe the prescribed regimen. Some simply refuse to take the medicines, [preferring] to stay in bed. Others repair their fences while supposedly disabled, or work in the fields or do similar work. This is not an occasion for false solidarity of efforts to cover up such cases." (*Odbojar* [Prague], No. 19, 1956.)

Social Insurance Today

IN 1956 a thorough reorganization of the social insurance programs took place to assure that the principle of reward according to "merit" would be applied to every aspect of social insurance. The system of preferences which had grown up during the eight years of Communist rule was codified to eliminate any tendency toward "egalitarianism." In the new regulations, "the Socialist principle of compensation varying with the nature and importance of the work will be thoroughly applied. This will be done by subdividing the employees in the Social Security system into three categories, with those who work in the most important branches of industry being granted the most favorable

claims. This measure will scale the work performed in a juster manner and will help to induce employees to be loyal to their jobs." (*Rude Pravo*, October 2, 1956.)

Other reasons adduced for the reorganization were the continued abuses of National Insurance due to absenteeism and labor turnover, and the increasing expense of the program.

Absenteeism

On numerous occasions the regime admitted that absenteeism was a constant companion of Health Insurance: "Some working people abuse . . . the advantages of [Health Insurance] to enrich themselves by receiving sickness benefits and in addition to them, making occasional money on the side. . . . This is, unfortunately, a widespread phenomenon." (*Pravnik*, No. 7, 1957.) To reward the deserving worker who kept his absences to a minimum and at the same time to punish the "shirker," Health Insurance was reorganized along the following lines:

Sickness benefits would be increased up to a maximum payment of 90 percent of the employee's wages. For those workers eligible to collect health benefits at this high rate, however, absenteeism due to "sickness" could remain an attractive proposition, particularly for the worker forced to work overtime without recompense in order to fulfill stiff norms in the factory. One such worker was quoted in *Rude Pravo* (January 18, 1957) as saying: "I prefer to be sick for 54 *koruny* a day than to work for 60." To eliminate this possibility, payment at lower rates for the first three days was introduced, and net earnings for three months based on the number of working days during this period were to be used in computing sickness benefits; working days missed without justification were not to be deducted. (*Rude Pravo*, October 18, 1956.)

Labor Turnover

"Job-hopping" had also become a problem, since a high labor turnover often resulted in a lowering of productive efficiency. In an interview in *Prace* (April 18, 1957), the Minister of Finance, Julius Duris, explained the problem in the following terms: "A high labor turnover has an unfavorable influence on production, does not permit the worker to acquire a . . . professional skill, and increases expenses." Already in 1953, as the quotations above indicate, Health Insurance was being used to force workers to stay on the job if they wished to preserve their benefits. After the 1956 reorganization of the social insurance programs, the Party paper, *Rude Pravo*, October 17, again stressed this point: "The new method of [insurance] computation takes full account of the duration of uninterrupted employment. Workers who change jobs without proper justification will not participate in the privilege of the substantially increased sickness benefit."

High Cost of Social Insurance

The third and perhaps most important reason for stiffening the regulations under which individuals could receive health benefits and old-age pensions was the increasingly



Residents in a home for the aged in southern Moravia.
Czechoslovak Life (Prague), February 1957

high cost of maintaining the social insurance programs. "In 1955 the State received 8.5 billion *koruny* in Wage Taxes. The cost of sickness and pension benefits, however, will amount to 12.1 billion *koruny* during the current year [1956]." (*Prace*, October 27, 1956.) The Chairman of the State Social Security Office therefore warned that "All working people must be told quite frankly that the growth of the claims against, and tasks of, the Social Security system often has reached the limits of our economic capacity." (*Rude Pravo*, April 11, 1956.)

Health Insurance

HEALTH INSURANCE as it now exists under the regulations in force since January 1, 1957, shows to what length the regime has gone in distorting as an instrument of discrimination what should be an a-political humanitarian endeavor open to all. Moreover, these discriminatory policies are beyond appeal; the ability to pay insurance premiums does not automatically entitle the individual to protection against sickness or old age.

As administered through the Central Trade Union Council (CTUC), the enterprise is responsible for contributing 10 percent of the total wages of all its employees; employers in private enterprises are expected to contribute 15 percent of the total wages for each employee, but are themselves excluded from health insurance coverage. All other employees, students, writers and artists, designated by the CTUC, are also entitled to sickness benefits.

Collective farmers and members of their families are insured on the basis of voluntary contractual agreements concluded between the individuals and the district administration. Contributions may range between 8 and 18 *koruny* per person per month—the greater the contribution, the greater the benefits.

Gainfully self-employed persons and independent farmers are excluded from Health Insurance. Furthermore, "the period during which the employee may have been gainfully self-employed is not included in the period of uninterrupted employment in the same enterprise on which the rates . . . of the Health Insurance benefits depend." (*Lidova Demokracie* [Prague], November 12, 1958.) In the event of sickness, State doctors and hospitals may be used, but fees are charged, and, of course, no cash benefits can be obtained.

Benefits

There are three categories of benefits which may be obtained under Health Insurance coverage: benefits in kind (spa treatments, recreation); cash benefits (for sickness, maternity and death); and family allotments. Treatment in spas may be offered to employees and members of their family free of charge; the selection of those entitled to such care is made by the organs of the Trade Unions. Membership in the trade union movement and payment of all membership fees are further conditions.*

* Collective farmers and their families are excluded from spa treatments and recreation benefits, unless the Health Insurance contract contains specific provisions to the contrary.

As it is applied, care in spas has lost all value as a medical measure and has become a reward for the "best workers" and members of the new ruling class: "A class viewpoint must indeed be applied . . . in the allocation of almost 214,000 assignments for treatment in spas . . . for the coming year 1959. If we assume that one assignment costs on an average of 1400 to 1500 *koruny*, treatment in spas together with travel fares will require more than 300 million *koruny*." (*Prace*, November 22, 1958.)

According to official sources, 201,900 persons obtained treatment in spas in 1956; this figure is to be increased through 1960, when 220,100 individuals will be allowed to participate. (*Finance a Uver* [Prague], No. 2-3, 1957.)

Recreation benefits also fall within the scope of Health Insurance; recreation centers are provided by the Trade Unions with union membership a prime requisite. Although such benefits were officially to be granted on the basis of the worker's need to regain his health (Act of November 30, 1956, No. 54, *Collection of Laws*), these benefits have, in fact, become "rewards to the best workers and victors of Socialist competition." (*Prace*, March 20, 1959.)

It appears, however, that nepotism also flourishes in the selection of those qualified for a "vacation" in such a center: "In selective recreation there . . . have been complaints that the officers of the [Trade Unions] have distributed among themselves and their friends the best recreation assignments and that they offered the other employees only the remaining allocations." (*Odborar*, No. 25, 1958.) The Party organ, *Rude Pravo*, November 13, 1957, printed the following complaint from a participant in a recreation trip to Bulgaria:

"This should have been a recreation trip for the best workers in Czechoslovakia. But immediately after we had assembled I was surprised to see that among the best workers there were in a number of cases also wives of the selected workers. Another thing that struck me was the fact that the majority of 'best workers' were from the ranks of the Trade Union apparatus and the regional Trade Union Councils."

Social Security Coverage
(in thousands)

Category	1949	1953	1957
Employees	3,485.0	4,251.8	4,803.3
Self-employed persons	1,155.0	600.0	350.1
Family members working for self-employed persons	266.3	90.9	36.7
Voluntarily insured persons	32.9	9.9	—
Members of collectives	—	232.8	429.6
Total number of insured	4,939.2	5,235.4	5,619.7

Source: *Statisticka Rocenka* (Prague), 1958.

Furthermore, the program has not been expanding but decreasing in recent years. In 1952, for example, 302,924 persons participated; in 1957, 239,248 took part. (*Statistická Rocenka*, 1958.) Although no official reasons for this decrease have been given, the high cost of maintaining the social insurance system, admitted by the Chairman of the State Social Security Office (see above), was probably a factor. In any case, the program has been highly restrictive, so that in 1956, out of 4,404,000 people (excluding collective farmers) working in the "Socialist sector of the economy," only 236,000 adults and 100,000 children received recreation benefits. (*Finance a Uver*, loc. cit.)

Cash benefits for sickness are based on the employee's net daily earnings (maximum assessable wage—100 *koruny*) over a three-month period preceding illness. The computation for such benefits is also dependent on the number of years of uninterrupted employment in the same enterprise. The rates for sickness benefits are as follows: up to 1 year—60 percent of net daily wage; 1 to 5 years—70 percent; 5 to 10 years—80 percent; over 10 years—90 percent. The minimum benefit that can be received is 16 *koruny* per day.

Due to the ruling that uninterrupted length of service was to be a major factor in determining the benefit, expenditures for sickness benefits fell from 691 million *koruny* in 1957 to 526 million in 1958; the average rate of sickness benefits during 1958 was 976 *koruny* per month. (*Lidova Demokracie*, December 7, 1958.) The average worker's wage, also in 1958, was estimated at 1,300 *koruny* per month.

No cash benefits are provided for collective farmers and their families in the Health Insurance contracts available to them. Even the extent of free medical treatment accorded them is strictly dependent on the amount of their contribution. The basic benefits they receive are medical treatment at home, at the office or in an institution, and in the case of maternity, the assistance of a doctor or midwife. If the contribution is less than 18 *koruny*, free medicine is not supplied. In certain cases, however, cash benefits are available, but they are drawn from a social welfare fund collected and disbursed within the collective.

Maternity benefits for female employees insured for at least 270 days preceding the birth of a child include 18 weeks maternity leave and the following cash benefits during her absence, based on the length of uninterrupted service in the same enterprise: up to 2 years—75 percent of net daily wage; 2 to 5 years—80 percent; over 5 years—90 percent. If a female employee or member of an employee's family gives birth to a child, she is entitled to an allowance of 650 *koruny* for each child born, in addition to her other cash benefits. On the death of an employee, the family is entitled to a funeral grant of 1,000 *koruny*.

Family Allowances

Family Allowances are also included in the Health Insurance program. Although the reason for their inclusion in this particular program has not been fully defined, undoubtedly this is in order to keep self-employed persons from receiving any family allotments. Moreover, the rates for employees who still possess a private plot of land ex-

Class Composition of the Population

	1930	1950	1957
Workers and other employees and their families	8,601,473	8,888,184	10,800,000
Members of collectives	—	1,927	992,000
Independent farmers	3,193,922	2,528,444	1,522,000
Small tradesmen	919,970	504,551	55,000
"Capitalists, kulaks"	1,283,132	415,344	45,000
Total inhabitants	13,998,497	12,338,450	13,414,000

Independent farmers, small tradesmen, "capitalists and kulaks" are excluded from both obligatory and voluntary Health Insurance; therefore, 1,622,000 persons were without organized health protection in 1957.

Source: *Statistická Rocenka* (Prague), 1958

ceeding .5 hectares are substantially lower than for other employees. The rates, as of April 1, 1959, for Family Allowances for employees are as follows (in *koruny* per month):

Number of children	Wages not exceeding					Employees who possess land
	1,400	2,200	3,000	3,800	over 3,800	
1	70	70	70	—	—	30
2	170	170	170	100	—	86
3	430	400	370	330	310	144
4	690	640	590	530	490	212
5	950	880	830	750	710	290
6	1,210	1,120	1,070	970	930	378

(*Lidova Demokracie*, March 13, 1959.)

Collective farmers receive Family Allowances only insofar as the social welfare fund within the collective is able to provide them. Other health services such as dental and medical care are also free to all employees and denied to self-employed persons and independent farmers.* For those seeking private medical and dental care the rates are as follows: 10 *koruny*—dental care in office; 20 *koruny*—medical care in the office; 50 *koruny*—medical care in a specialist's office; 30 *koruny*—for a home visit (45 *koruny* for night visit).

Social Security

THE ORGANIZATION of the Social Security program is based on principles similar to those governing Health Insurance. Compensation according to merit and the duration of uninterrupted employment are the determining factors in computing pension benefits. Unlike Health Insurance, Social Security is not denied to any segment of the

* Independent farmers are accorded free health treatment in the event of a work accident. All citizens are given free preventive care in the treatment of tuberculosis, venereal diseases, and certain other categories of contagious diseases.

population, but nevertheless one of the results of the pension system is to liquidate gainfully self-employed persons and independent farmers, because benefit and premium rates have been effectively manipulated for this purpose.

The administration of Social Security is in the hands of the State Social Security Offices in Prague and Bratislava, and it is this organization which is charged with the application of the insurance program. All employees are divided into three categories according to the nature of their work: the first category comprises underground employment (such as mining) and flying; the second category includes occupations which are considered by the State as particularly difficult; and the third, all other types of work. This policy has produced a relatively small class of those receiving higher pension benefits (workers in the first and second categories) than the vast majority of other workers (in the third category). In 1957 the number of employees who were covered by pension insurance was 4,803,000 individuals, of whom 385,000 belonged to those in the first two categories.

Length of service is as decisive in determining pension rates as the nature of the work performed, but in order for the employee to prove that he has spent so many years of uninterrupted service in the same enterprise, that he has served good time in the Czechoslovak armed forces, etc., an application for benefits must be accompanied by certificates concerning all previous employment. A resulting bureaucratization of the Social Security program has apparently occurred which is frequently characterized by disputes and dissatisfaction on the part of the insured:

"There are so many arguments about benefits. To someone who isn't satisfied with the correct assessment, you can explain time and again that the benefits are not based on the . . . color of the applicant's eyes; there are rules for everything. To get rid of someone who complains, the official . . . tells him: if you aren't satisfied, old man, go to court. The judge then gets to work and the old man loses his case." (*Praca* [Bratislava], January 23, 1959.)

Finally, the computation for old-age benefits depends on the average annual earnings of the worker over the last 10 years before the claim was filed, or in some cases, over the last 5 years, if this proves more advantageous to the employee. Average annual earnings up to a sum of 24,000 *koruny* are fully computed; after this figure, only one-third of the annual earnings is assessed up to a maximum amount of 60,000 *koruny* per year. Earnings prior to 1949, however, are disregarded. This last measure has affected thousands of employees whose incomes and contributions during a period of employment are not used to compute their benefits.

Pension Benefits

For an employee who has been working for at least 20 years and has reached the age of 60 (females, 55), or for an employee who has been working at least 5 years and has reached the age of 65, the highest and lowest rates of old-age benefits have been determined in the following manner: workers in the first categories shall receive

benefits not exceeding 90 percent of the average annual earnings; other employees will receive benefits not in excess of 85 percent of the average annual earnings.*

Effective April 1, 1959, the minimum old-age benefits were set at 400 *koruny* per month; the maximum rates were announced as follows: in the first category, 2,200 *koruny* per month; in the second, 1,800; and in the third, 1,600. This new minimum was only applied to those individuals who had received pensions after January 1, 1957; an increase, however, was accorded to a selected number of former old-age pensioners, also as of January 1, 1957. (*Rude Pravo*, March 7, 1959.)

According to official figures published in *Finance a Uver*, *loc. cit.*, there were 2,025,000 pensioners in 1956, of whom 1,012,000 were selected to receive a pension increase; 1,013,000 pensioners thus received no increase. In 1956 there were also approximately 250,000 pensioners who were receiving a benefit of less than 400 *koruny* per month. Under the new ruling 130,000 of these people were granted raises. There still remain approximately 120,000 old-age pensioners who have received no increase and are forced to live on an extremely low benefit of less than 400 *koruny* per month.

A statement which appeared in *Rude Pravo* at the time of the increase gives some clues as to who was left out: "This increase in benefits does not cover former entrepreneurs and representatives of the capitalist class, nor pensioners who were [formerly] members of the independent managerial class."

Social Security benefits may be officially reduced if the recipients are persons "who were outstanding representatives of the former political and economic order. . . [this reduction consists in] an amount proportionate to the period . . . during which these persons were representatives of the [capitalist] class." (*Collection of Laws*, Act No. 41, 1958.)

Individuals may also be deprived of Social Security benefits if they have been sentenced to prison for over two years.

Benefits—Collective and Private Farmers

For farmers in collectives, a program reminiscent of the prewar system of social insurance has been instituted, whereby the individual may insure himself according to his own choice and receive benefits graduated according to the premium paid:

Premium	Benefit
14 (<i>koruny</i> per month)	230
26	270
40	310
54	350
70	390
88	440

* So-called "one-third benefits" have been designed to keep the worker productive as long as possible. These benefits are paid to those employees who remain on the job after they have reached legal retirement age.



Patients in a Czechoslovak institute for children with early brain damage affecting motor controls. Generally, such clinics are free, but not open to the children of the self-employed (small artisans, etc.) or of independent farmers.

Photo from *Tschechoslowakei* (Prague), No. 10, 1958

The premiums of independent farmers are determined by the State Social Security Office on the basis of the size of the farmer's land, productive capacity and quality of the soil. Other self-employed persons contribute 10 percent of their income, assessed on the basis of the highest-paid State employee in a similar job; members of their families are assessed at 11 percent of income. Due to the high cost of this insurance, in 1955 these individuals were 1,069,000 *koruny* in arrears. (*Rude Pravo*, October 1, 1956.)

The following table illustrates the low rate of pension benefits accorded to those persons engaged in independent economic activities. Even the highest benefit is lower than the minimum benefit (400 *koruny*) accorded to employees in the "Socialist sector of the economy."

Average annual basis of assessment	Maximum monthly benefit		
	according to years insured		
	6	8	10
up to 2,100 (<i>koruny</i>)	210	230	230
2,101- 3,300	225	260	270
3,301- 4,500	234	276	294
4,501- 5,700	243	298	318
5,701- 7,800	252	314	340
7,801-10,200	261	336	370
over 10,200	270	350	390

(Governmental Ordinance of December 18, 1956, No. 56.)

Other Benefits

Regulations governing Disability Insurance benefits are similar to those governing old-age pensions; the only major difference is the age at which a person may become eligible. Under the current ruling, an individual must be 20 years

old, with at least one year of employment or insurance coverage.

Widows' benefits are restricted to a woman who is incapable of working, either due to a disability or to the necessity of caring for her children, or whose husband died as a result of a work-injury after she had reached the age of 40 years. In these cases, she is entitled to 70 percent of the pension of the insured.

Work-Injuries (or Accident) Insurance benefits for an employee vary from 40 to 65 percent of his earnings, according to the length of uninterrupted service on the job, and whether or not the injury is considered as totally or partially disabling. After one year of collecting Work-Injury benefits, the worker is entitled to Disability benefits. For collective and independent farmers as well as for self-employed persons, no cash benefits are awarded; free medical treatment, however, is available. After one year, these persons also become eligible for Disability benefits.

Conclusion

IN COMPARISON with non-Communist countries, even those with broad social insurance programs, the East European welfare benefits are often quite generous. For example, Belgium offers old-age benefits paying up to 75 percent of the average lifetime earnings; on the other hand, Czechoslovakia provides pension benefits up to 90 percent of the employee's average monthly earnings. On the other hand, these high benefits are generally reserved for only those workers in the first two wage categories (12.5 percent of those covered). According to figures previously cited, 120,000 pensioners are still receiving less than the minimum of 400 *koruny* per month; this latter figure is far from

(Continued on page 48)



Workers, as Patko describes, hauling rock to build a power station on the outskirts of Lhasa.

Hungarians in Tibet

The Genesis of Revolt

IN AUGUST 1956, just before the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolt, an expedition set out from Hungary to test new-model trucks in the high latitudes and rugged terrain of the Tibetan Himalayas. Having gone as far as Western China by train and air, the convoy then drove almost 1,300 miles to Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, often travelling at heights of 15,000 feet. The group visited many points of interest in Tibet, then headed back to China. The Hungarians arrived home late in November, just after the Soviet armies had crushed the Revolt.

The expedition was led by Imre Patko, a well-known Communist newspaperman (he had joined the Party in 1945), and in many ways a typical pre-Revolt Communist intellectual. Patko wrote a book about the trip, illustrated with the excellent photographs of Miklos Rev, a member of the expedition. Under the title "Tibet" it was published in Budapest in 1957 by the Fine Arts Press.

Patko's book is extremely interesting, both for the light it sheds on conditions in Tibet prior to that country's uprising against its Chinese Communist overlords, and for its insights into the attitudes of an intelligent Hungarian Communist who shared the doubts, hesita-

tions and ideological discomforts of the men who sparked the Hungarian Revolt. As a Communist, he naturally approves, in theory at least, the economic and social changes projected by the Chinese. Yet the experiences of his own country leave him racked with doubt; he has seen the misery caused by the imposition of alien ways of life crushing national traditions. Time and again, while speaking of Tibet, Patko seems to have in mind the dislocations and terrors of the ruthless installation of Communism in his country.

Further, indicating the degree to which the dissident Hungarian Communists had moved toward a non-doctrinaire humanism, Patko shows strong sympathy for the religious basis of Tibetan society, implying that the inner life provided by their religion means far more to the people than the reforms imposed from without, no matter what social and economic improvements these might bring. Again and again he seems to be saying that real improvement can come only if the national pride and religious beliefs of the people are taken into consideration.

These attitudes, of course, were important in the ferment leading to the Hungarian Revolt, and Patko's exposition has for us, looking through the double prism of the Hungarian and Tibetan uprisings, much significance. Such a volume could appear only in the relative intellectual relaxation of the immediate post-Revolt period; the Kadar regime would not permit it today.

Following are excerpts from Patko's book; the illustrations appeared therein.

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Too Much Politics

The Hungarians go see a school in Lhasa; Patko makes clear his distaste for the blatant political indoctrination.

WE VISITED a school at Lhasa, where almost 700 children are studying in modern schoolrooms, well lit by many windows under red-yellow-and-blue eaves. We observed with awe the Tibetan small-fry, as they drew on paper sheets, or in lined notebooks (with India ink, Chinese fashion) the Tibetan characters. Some of them wrote almost like artists drawing wonderful designs on the walls of a secret room. From another classroom, we could hear the children chanting in chorus the names of the letters written on the blackboard: "Li-chi-chi, Chü-tsü-sö, Popou-mo-fou, Yi-vü-yü, Ay-ey-ao-ou," and the like. Here Chinese was taught—not ancient, but modern phonetic Chinese writing. The fifth-graders were writing a theme. I didn't fancy the subject. Too much politics, I thought. The children had to answer the question: "Which country is the most bloodthirsty?" (the most wolf-like, to be literal).

The Tibetan teacher, clad in a brown cloak, his black hair pulled up in a topknot with a red ribbon, wearing the ever-present turquoise earrings, walked among his pupils with a friendly smile, and, when asked, translated parts of the essays. Chücum Cherum, a dour-faced little girl, wrote: "Countries which exploit others are imperialistic. They are the most wolf-like." Coma Lobsang, daughter of a government employee, went on like this: "The American imperialists oppress the people, who live in misery. That's why they are the wolves among nations."

The singing lesson in the next room was much more pleasant. A Tibetan lad in a yellow shirtwaist . . . led the singers. We found a Tibetan teacher here too. More than

half of the faculty of fifty are from Tibet. Most of the Chinese teachers already have learned, or are learning, the Tibetan language.

Talk With a Nobleman

Patko converses with a Tibetan nobleman, a high official in the service of the Dalai Lama. They discuss the social structure of Tibet. Patko very clearly shows the man's hesitation to speak freely before an unknown foreigner and Communist (and his careful use of acceptable phraseology), and no less clearly his own liking and respect for one so different in background and ideology.

AFTER LUNCH I hadn't even finished my cigarette when they announced Men Thöba, who had come in response to my wish to learn the structure of Tibetan society. He was waiting in the guest room. This Tibetan aristocrat was a lean man of medium height, around fifty. He wore a simple brown cloak. . . . There were deep lines in his swarthy face, a cool sparkle in his eyes. His face and his posture mirrored a certain ritual formality. He was a high official of the Lhasa government—Vice-President of the State Treasury, I believe—and head of an aristocratic old Tibetan family. I thanked him for coming, and explained what I wanted of him. It wasn't easy. Men Thöba had never studied sociology and was no Marxist. He was a Buddhist and an aristocrat. Though progressive, wishing truly for Tibet to rise above its medieval state, he never even tried to define the society he dwelt in. At first he just repeated definitions read in the papers, adding a few of his own experiences.

"We have a feudalistic society," he said, "where rank and office usually descend from father to son." He bowed and smiled politely. Seated in the arm-chair before me, he had the air of one who has said all there is to say.

"What are the social stratifications in the province of Lhasa?" I asked.

"There are aristocrats, landlords, serfs and middle-class people. Aristocrats are of two kinds: civil, the Shütung, and clerical, the Chötung."

A bow, a smile. Now there was really nothing more to say.

"Would you be so kind as to explain what you mean by feudalism?"

Men Thöba looked at me in surprise. He was still all poise and dignity, but must have felt like the head of a class when asked—however considerately—a question not yet covered in the lesson.

"We Tibetans," he said, "being uneducated and backward, have no experience in speaking with foreigners." He was afraid he could not make things clear—I should rather ask our Chinese friends. But I pressed my point. Men Thöba started to tell of the great differences in the lives, duties and pleasures of the aristocrats and the masses. The masses were poor and had no say in State affairs. That was feudalism.

"In Europe we regard feudalism as a social structure depending on land ownership, where the various ranks, like the steps of a stairway, lie one above the other. Is that not so in Tibet?"

"Yes, it is something like that here, too," said my guest. "In our country the supreme civil and clerical power is the Dalai Lama. He grants the land to the aristocrats and monasteries. He works with two branches of government, a clerical, the 'Yigchang,' and a civil, the 'Kasag.' Both comprise aristocrats, since even the clerical aristocracy consists of members of high-ranking families. In the monasteries one finds no feudalism. They are democratic, elect their own leaders. And, believe me, even in the Great Lama's dual government, the members get in by their talents and virtues, not by family connections."

"Does nobleman also mean landowner, here, too?"

"Among the clerical nobility it is wisdom and the level of holiness that counts, but the civil aristocrats, the 'Shütung,' are all landowners."

It was getting too late to detain Men Thöba longer. Still I couldn't hold back the question: Did he see any need of reforms in Tibet?

Men Thöba answered gravely: "Long ago Tibet was a famous country, its people great, famed in art and war. But these virtues have passed with the old glory. Much is wrong with our present way of life. The oppression is great, and the bulk of the people suffer a lot. After our peaceful liberation, conditions improved to some degree. I hope that gradually there will be more and even better changes, till the masses can shake off their backwardness, poverty and oppression. As to how and when this may happen, I cannot tell, being unversed in politics. But I love my country and my people. I want to see reforms that serve them."

"Though but a guest of a few days here, I also have the same wish, O honorable Men Thöba."

He bowed, put his palms lightly together as in prayer, then shook my hand European fashion. I count him among



The Dalai Lama, receiving members of the Hungarian expedition.

those aristocrats with whom the Chinese Communists and progressives jointly can build the new Tibet.

At a State Farm

Patko visits an experimental State farm staffed largely by Chinese. The farm, some 1,200 acres, was frankly a propaganda establishment for large-scale agriculture and received as much aid as necessary. In the comments of Chang, the Chinese farm director, on the necessity of making haste slowly and of suiting changes to local conditions there are echoes of the pre-Revolt demands of the Hungarians.

YOU MAY ASK why the demobilized soldiers began farming only five acres. They were right to start modestly, concerned not with vast crops, but with the success of the experiment, propaganda in its noblest form. Tibet was liberated in peace, but the 'Hans' (Chinese soldiers) did not come here as if to their home. The natives scanned every move they made with distrust. If anything went wrong here, it would affect all Tibet for decades. Primitive suspicion runs deep. Even with the greatest patience, example and success are the sole means of gaining the trust of these people. Rather start with little, but do it well.

"The main thing was to learn the secrets of nature here, adjust to them and harness them for our own ends. Knowing more about this strange, extreme climate and the soil, operations could be extended. Starting on a large scale, with so many unknown factors, we could easily have failed, but now are forging ahead nicely, enlarging and mechanizing. Those first five acres were cultivated in the most primitive way. Then came the 'International March of Machines': the Hungarian combine (Chang, with not just Chinese, but real diplomatic finesse, fanned our national pride), the Russian tractor, German seeding machine, and Czechoslovak equipment."

Chang made no comment, but just as we reached the Hungarian combine—which stood useless because a part was missing for which they had asked in vain, getting nothing as yet but promises—an English-made tractor puffed into the yard. The "International March of Machines" advances.

[Chang continued]: "Last year (1955) we had our debut. The work of our machines was shown to the people of Lhasa and its vicinity. I can tell you, it was a sight to see both the noble and his serf attend the show together. First we plowed with the ancient wooden plow, then with the tractor. They could see how a combine did the work of a whole crew of reapers in far less time. We explained how much more nutriment tractor-turned soil provided. Most of the nobles knew what machines could do for farming. The peasants were amazed, though still suspicious—at least a good many of them.

"There are two great difficulties here. I already mentioned one—the climate. The other is the people's backwardness and lack of education. We now have two tractor schools, where even girls enroll. At a ball, the other day, I recall dancing with a tractor-school girl. Peasant girls in Tibet are strong. They work at least as hard as the men, and this shows in their build. I prayed fervently, lest my dear tractor-girl step on my feet while dancing, for she resembled a darling, clear-eyed, loving little tank. We must teach them scientific farming," enthused Chang, almost as if he wanted us to join their project and stay on at the farm.

A Tibetan Farmer

Talking to Yisi Nangasa, a Tibetan farmer, who has a nice house "like the country home of the Hungarian gentry 200 years ago," Patko tries to find out something about the economics of Tibetan agriculture. He also, in quite mild and undoctinaire fashion, attempts to point out disadvantages in the system of dependence on monasteries; serenely, the farmer holds to his traditional ways.

"HOW CAN YOU cultivate your land? It's more than your family can handle, isn't it?"

Though even my interpreter couldn't tell me how much 50 *khe* of land was, he laughed at my question. Yisi was smiling too, and told me his family comprised five persons: his wife and himself, their son, daughter-in-law and grandson. Nine full-time workers dwelt in their house,

plus four or five seasonal workers. He fed them and gave each a suit of clothes. For wages the men got 8, the women 7 *khe* of grain, and living quarters.

"Are that many workers enough for the harvest?"

"Oh, no," said Yisi. "For the harvest I hire ten or fifteen extra hands, and, for one or two weeks, another fifty, or I wouldn't make out. I pay them 2 *tse* daily (20 *tse* = 1 *khe*) and provide food, drink, necessities. If they want it in money, each worker gets 10 *san* a day. I have huge expenses for the men and for taxes. Last year I had to take a loan from the monastery, since living costs have gone up, and if the crops are poor our land can't provide for us. A year ago we had rain, it was a good season. For one *khe* of barley planted the soil gave back 16 to 17 *khe*. But in a bad season it yields only 4 to 5 *khe*. This year we had little rain, it looks like a poor crop. I don't know how much I'll harvest, but it will be less than a year ago."

"How about your debts? Does the monastery charge interest?"

"Yes, of course. Last year I borrowed 30 *khe* of barley. After each 5 *khe* I must render one more, so I owe 36 in all. If I ask for money—mostly also from the monastery—then I pay 10 *san* interest after each 50 *san*."

I asked the interpreter to tell him that the People's Government gives loans at 2 percent interest for Tibetan peasants. Why didn't he apply? Didn't he know about it?

Yisi Nangasa had applied for a State loan, but failed to get it. "They saw I wore good clothes and even earrings. They thought I was asking for money only to lend it to the poor at higher interest," he said, without a trace of pique.



Chang, the State farm director with whom Patko talked.

"Haven't you tried better ways of tilling? I heard you were in a farming contest with the Chinese soldiers." Yisi denied this—not he, but his neighbors competed. He only went to see the judging. He felt the Tibetans did better, since they sow a *khe* of grain where the Chinese sow only a half. He found that the Tibetans' crops were higher and thicker than those of the Chinese, who doubtless made a mistake, for half a *khe* of seed won't do for that much land.

"Don't you think if you plowed deeper, the soil would yield more?" I inquired. "They say in Peiping that here sometimes the earth is hardly scratched before the seed goes in."

Yisi said he had two wooden plows and a steel plow, and could go over a foot deep. I asked him about prices. He started to complain again.

"The price of grain has gone up since the People's Liberation Army came in. We used to buy 1 *khe* of grain for 25 to 30 *san*. After two years, it was 200 *san*. Now it has dropped to 135 *san*. No good. Still too high."

"But you don't just buy. You can sell grain too!"

"You don't see it, clearly," said Yisi, shaking his head. "All our crops go for taxes, and what we need, we must buy at high prices."

I decided to tackle a big job: to calculate my host's



Members of the Hungarian expedition guided on their first walk in Lhasa; in the background, the Dalai Lama's Palace.

income and outgo for the year 1955. He could not understand the word "budget" or "balance-sheet." Still, I am sure he keeps some kind of accounting. I saw his abacus and certain notes, but he kept no books as such.

I asked Yisi what he thought of the reforms in China. Would it not be good to make changes here, too?

The farmer was reluctant; he knew little about such matters.

"But the way things stand," [I said], "it is not good for you. Maybe this year you'll need a loan, too. You pay 200 *khe* for your lands. Why must you send an extra four men to do statute-labor? They cost you four times as much as your own workers. Don't you think this should be changed?"

"My son is getting an education," said Yisi gravely, "and he says we should all be free, not under any lord. I listen to his talk, but doubt its value. If I don't pay the monastery, the others won't either, and unpaid debts impoverish. That would harm religion."

"Suppose the reforms did no harm to the monasteries, as I have heard said? What if they got the same amount of grain and money from the government as they get from their tenant farmers?"

"If the land were taken from the aristocrats and monasteries," reasoned Yisi tranquilly, as though repeating things often pondered, "if all the land were taken away and distributed among the people, then the government really would have to take care of the monasteries. But how? Only with taxes. And who would pay the taxes? The people who got the land. Then whatever we once gave to landlords and monasteries, we'd give to the State. What's the difference?"

"There is one," I argued. "They claim that the government will build factories, aid industry and help farms produce more. Your income will rise. It will be easier to pay taxes."

Yisi's answer was definite, but on another track: "For us, religion is the essential thing. Even if it is hard now, and we must pay a lot to the monasteries, it doesn't matter. We'll be rewarded after death. We live by our religion, and mean to abide by it."

"No one doubts that. You can remain devout and grow richer, too. You'll be able to spend more, not only for yourself, but for the lamas. Wouldn't that be good?"

The Tibetan weighed the truth of my words, then nodded: "Yes, let's hope that will come."

Shambala

In Lhasa, a Lama named Norbu Khenrap, dean of the University of Science, tells Patko of the future of the world and the wonders that will be. Whether it was conscious on Patko's part or not, the whole account decidedly sounds like a satire on standard Communist apocalypses, with Shambala substituted for the Soviet Union.

I ASKED KHENRAP to talk in detail about our planet, the earth.

"The earth consists of six parts," he answered affably, "the most important being Shambala. The first part is the



Tibetan nomads

Arctic, the polar region. The second is Shambala. The third, Gyang (China). The fourth, Li. The fifth, Tibet. The sixth, India. These are the old names. They use different ones nowadays, and each part has smaller parts, with separate names. But the most important," he stressed again, "is Shambala."

"Where is that great land and how can we reach it?"

"It is at the north end of the world, but no one can get there now, because it is barred by ice-rivers. This Shambala, country of the Ninety-Seven Princes, will conquer the globe after four hundred and seventy years. All evil in the world will perish, but Shambala, where true Buddhism flourishes, will survive and enthrone Goodness in the world." Norbu Khenrap nodded, and two monks brought in a painting. "That is Shambala," said he. The room already was half in darkness, but I caught the gleam of gold and precious stones decking the Ninety-Seven Princes, who ruled over green waters, meadows, bright palaces. "Buddha told his disciples that this land would have twenty-five kings, and the reign of the twenty-fifth would see Shambala's conquest of the world. Our twentieth king already has ruled thirty years. In 2426, under the twenty-fifth king, will come the third world war, which Shambala will win. Evil will perish, Good will be glorified, and only two kings will rule over the world, one in Shambala, one in Tibet."

"Then, according to this, there will be no world war till 2426. Is that what the holy books say?"

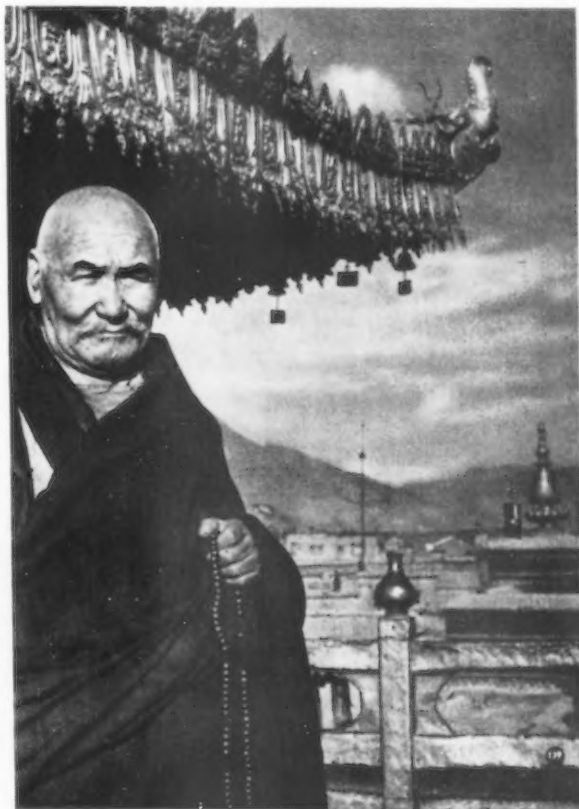
"It's a known fact that these Scriptures contain many forecasts which have proved true. It was written, for instance, that in 1906, Year of the Wooden Dragon, foreigners would invade the country, and in this same year Younghusband's British expedition forced the passes of the Himalayas, paving the way for English influence, English soldiers and merchants in Tibet. As for future wars, strife between other nations may occur—sad though it be—but no war with Shambala is due till 2426, when it will be not among men, but Gods, a fight to defend the pure Ideal, Buddha's teachings. For Shambala is a wondrous country. All mathematics came from there, to be spread everywhere by wise men reincarnated in different lands.

Many of our people came from Shambala, and many will return there after death." The learned Lama was half dreaming by then, hardly caring if I understood. He spoke of religion in Shambala, and its key doctrine, the teaching of the Oneness of Differences. After eighteen hundred years there would be neither rich nor poor, everyone would be equal and free, all beauty, all wealth would be shared, and human selfishness would cease. Everyone on earth would have the religion now thriving in Shambala. And those who not only believe in, but live by this religion, after just one life would attain Nirvana, the Buddhist Heaven.

Prices and Patience

In a talk with the Chinese Communist head of a store in Lhasa, Patko again reveals his interest in the reality behind rhetoric and his conviction that patience and attention to unique local conditions are necessary for successful change.

"PRICES, after the liberation, became a problem. The demand has grown vastly, even though we try to get inland supplies for the army. People streamed into the towns, yet the market did not expand. The opening of the two roads help a lot, but we still can't ship enough provisions. Only a railroad will solve the problem. With your indulgence, I'll give you some data on the rise in prices."



An elderly Lama

The figures showed grave inflation. Meat prices, for instance, rose 500 percent after the liberation, salt 800 percent. Butter, copper and yak-leather rose nearly 400 percent. Barley and other grains followed suit till 1954-55, when the government stepped in. (Taking the 1951 price as 100, they now sell for 167, and there is hope for a further drop.) Tea grew cheaper. Taking the pre-liberation price as 100, it sells at 74.4. Sugar went down, too. Whatever is brought from China is sold at a 100 percent loss, just to keep prices down. At the same time, a marked increase occurred in the prices of native products (such as wool, for instance). Wool rose from 4.5 to 8.00 [*khe*?] within a year. That favors the big producers, but not the consumers or small farmers. If the crop is poor, they must buy grains and wool on the open market for rent and taxes to the monastery or landlord.

"We can't say yet that the people live much better than before," said Niu Ching-sha. "But there is a great segment whose life already has improved. Building projects and roads all need workers. And workers are paid well here. They get rice, tea, and food, besides their wages. By contrast, the nobles rarely paid money, gave little food, and, if they pleased, could even deny this to the serfs. We are enlarging our building program to help more and more workers. We'll have plenty of goods soon, things will improve in 1957, we'll force prices down.

"We've done a lot for agriculture, too. We give interest-free or low-cost loans, seed, and a chance to buy farm machinery and tools reasonably. We improve the people's life gradually, but as yet can do so only in a limited way."

I told him about the stone-carrying women working in a dry river-bed, who had to give half of their wages to the overseer.

"Yes, that happens often. But just think," argued Niu Ching-sha hotly, "formerly their lords might have paid them nothing. This is a problem of the social structure. There is still feudalism here, with remnants of serfdom. Some of the big nobles already squawk about the limits we set on profits. And here a real solution can come only through reform, mainly land reform. And for that we still must wait. Meanwhile, we can help by creating an abundance of goods, controlling the market by State-supplied items. This is not a situation, nor is Tibet a country, where book-plans and neat theories work smoothly. This is a special problem, needing a special approach. [Chinese] Chairman Mao recommended that we achieve reforms peacefully, strengthening unity, making gradual improvements. That is our policy. Meanwhile we try to foster class consciousness in the peasant-serf masses. This is imperative! Do you understand? We have the patience for it." He spoke of patience more and more vehemently. I warmed to him by the minute, hoping only that the realization of this fine policy would prove as good in practice as in theory.

The Promises

In conversation with a Chinese Communist functionary, Patko gives a summary of Communist plans for Tibet. These were the reforms and the methods which China



Two citizens of Lhasa

promised to abide by; gradualism, minimal dislocation of Tibetan life, etc., and it was China's abandonment of these promises that set off the Tibetan uprising early in 1959.

WE WALKED AROUND the city once more, and went out to the power plant under construction. On the steep mountainside the men looked like ants, as they worked the rocks with sledge hammers and axes. Building blocks were quarried and shaped on the spot. The reinforced concrete structure was about complete; we could climb up to the top and look into the machine-shop where the first units were already installed. The other two generators will be ready soon, and then the whole little power plant will start up. It will have a total capacity of 660 kilowatts, and even this is a great thing here, where in the last decade only portable dynamos were used. The big V-shaped reservoir gets its water from a high lake, through a 30-mile pipe line system, across a mountain.

There was a modern cement mixer, but the stone was brought on two-wheeled carts drawn by men who put their whole weight into it as they strained uphill with the giant blocks. Trucks are scarce; manpower can be spared from the 2,300 workers on the job. Wages are quite good. An engineer gets 400, a worker's helper gets 100 yuan per month. Electricity in the "Middle Ages"—a strange sight. We heard of even stranger things that evening. Facts and figures, drilling and other data, seemed like miracles here, as Ming Fan, Secretary of the [Communist] Tibetan Workers' Community detailed them. . . .

Ming Fan also said some interesting things about the policy of the Chinese People's Government and Communist Party. He tried to condense meaningfully its basic theories. Reforms will come, as was already decided in

1951, during the peaceful liberation of Tibet, and the Dalai and Panchen Lamas have approved, saying Tibet must travel the road of Socialism, which is possible only through democratic reforms. These reforms must come from above, gradually and peacefully, as elsewhere in China.

The plan for renewing Tibet should be effected according to Mao Tse-tung's directive: "All that now exists should be changed only for better, not for the worse." So the property and animals of the wealthy will not be distributed, though land reform is inescapable. This, too, will come only later, for reforms should proceed in the following stages:

1) End unreasonable customs and extreme cases of social inequity (for example that nobles and poor people must not sit in the same room; women must not speak at meetings). Old usury-debts, statute-labor and serfdom should be annulled.

2) Land reform. The first thing here is to prepare the reforms well, and gain agreement from the majority of the people and nobles. For this, preparations should follow these six principles:

a) Administrative personnel must be nationalized. A 20 to 30-thousand-person Tibetan cadre must be set up for key State and economic jobs.

b) The "National Cadre" of the youth organization and Party should be reformed in "true Tibetan" style.

c) The financial status of Tibetan clerical and civil leaders, the wealth and social status of the nobles, must not change unfavorably.

d) Production must be increased, the living standards of the peasants must be raised through low-cost loans and the availability of tools and goods.

e) The industries of Tibet, so rich in raw material, should be enlarged, thus creating a new class of Tibetan workers.

f) Farming must be improved. The people should be taught new methods in agriculture, industry, government.

3) National unity should be strengthened so as to counter the imperialists and rebuild the country, and within this unity more and more people with different views should be gathered, besides the Communists. Ming Fan gave this definition of Tibetan society: a feudalistic slave-holding society with a Lamaist, aristocratic dictatorship. He opined that the present situation, where the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama and the national government issue separate orders, is not good. It will be corrected by creating an "autonomous territory." The most important thing is the United Front policy, a very different one from that of the Chinese mainland. There the striking power of the United Front is against feudalism and imperialism, the national bourgeoisie and middle class supporting it; here it is against imperialism, members of the feudalistic ruling families supporting it. Still, the Tibetan United Front is part of the total Chinese Democratic United Front.

Concerning religion, Ming Fan, at the founding of the All-Chinese Buddhist Society, talked in detail, in the full glare of publicity. The Dalai Lama rightly said of religion, stressed Ming Fan, "that it must develop and the development of religion parallels political development."

"Concerning freedom of religion," [Ming Fan said], "let's take this saying: 'If you want to know the future, take a good look at the past and present.' Experience shows that there is freedom of religion now, and this will endure. Reforms may bring great changes, but religious freedom should not disappear. In China these changes already have occurred, yet the monasteries are supported. For religion is as basic as politics, but the two are not the same, and are unconnected. Buddhism has a great past in Tibet and the Buddhists have done great work in creating culture, in fighting imperialism, in supporting peaceful liberation. The Party and the government ask you to study the Chings (Holy Scriptures of Buddhism) so that Tibetan culture may be further developed according to them. Try to keep unified, respect the smaller sects and don't let one sect meddle in another's affairs. Discover the hidden values of the Chings and prove that not only in the past has Tibet gained great glory in the development of Buddhism, but it will also gain such credit in the future, and will stay true to its traditions. The Party holds an approving view of religion, but supports believers and non-believers in the same way, and also demands that not only religion, but the Constitution be respected."

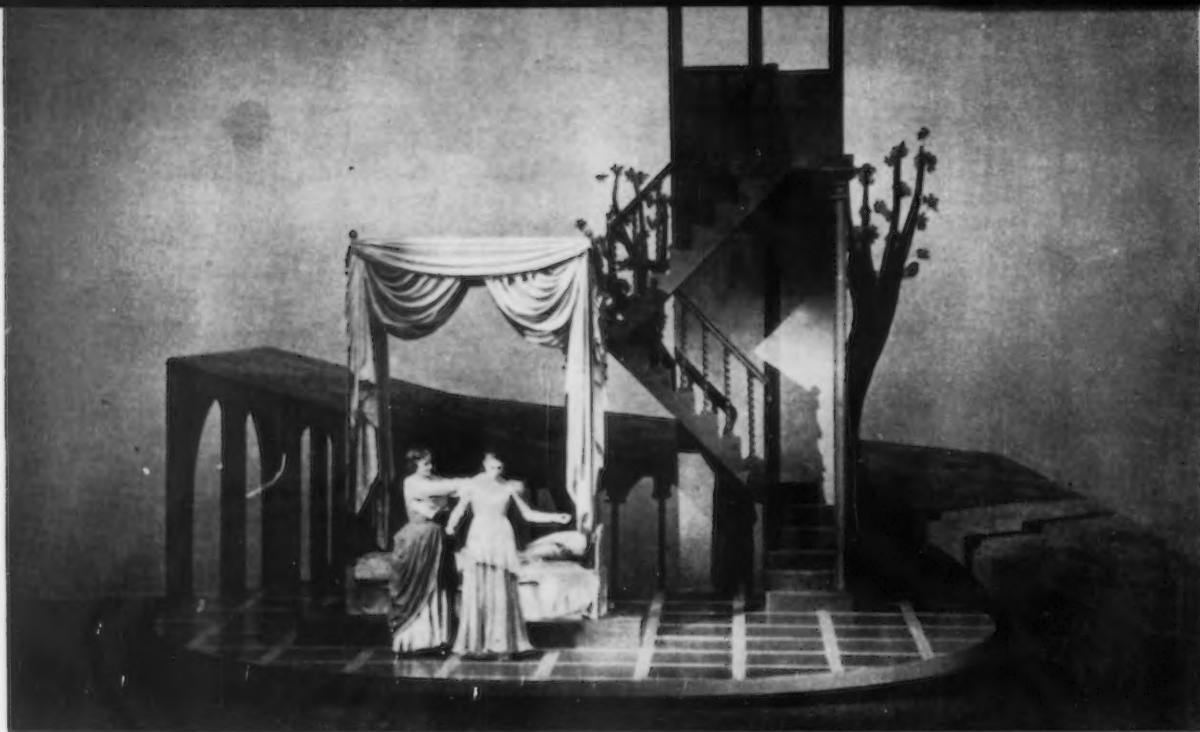
"In Tibet the whole population is Buddhist and religious. The people must be convinced that it is better to abandon poverty and backwardness, and this can come about by gradual peaceful reforms from above, based on mutual agreement. We ask the Tibetan people to assume a controlling, judging and helpful stance toward the Communist Tibetan Workers' Community and the local organizations."

From the Party Secretary's words, I believe we can quite clearly picture the future of Tibet. From him, we certainly learned something which telegraph poles, motor-cycling lamas and new construction by themselves could not tell.

It may well be that all this is just the distant future. But certainly many Tibetans already like it. Some oppose, while others enthuse.

A Tibetan shepherd with the sling he uses instead of a whip.





Polish set designers have done some striking recent work in the restaging of classics. Above, "Romeo and Juliet"; below, Racine's "Phedre."

Photos from *Poland* (Warsaw), No. 2, 1958 and No. 2, 1959

Theater in the Soviet Bloc

In the post-Stalin thaw, the East European stage veered toward the West, and new Western plays, styles and methods dominated, while "Socialist realism" tended to vanish. And, far from abandoning its prescribed function as a political platform, the theater often used it to attack the Communist system. Now the theater is again being subjected to Party dictate, but still shows signs of independence and resistance. This article surveys the stage in Poland, Romania and Bulgaria; a previous article covered Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

Poland

POLAND'S THEATER was galvanized by the explosive events of 1956, and today may be said to be the only genuinely "living" theater in the Soviet bloc. Politics and art have fused in the theater, which gives a highly polished reflection of the dominant strains in present Polish attitudes. These would appear to be: cynicism about Poland's political past and future, a voracious appetite for any and all fruits of Western art and culture, and a general irreverence toward social institutions, political, clerical or whatever.

The outstanding mark of the 1957-58 theatrical season in Poland was the avalanche of contemporary plays from the West. They ranged from popular light comedy, mostly from America, to the avant-garde, whose center is Paris, and whose style and point of view is embodied in the plays of Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco.

This season was hailed on the one hand—by liberals—as the "most interesting season since the war" (*Nowa Kultura* [Warsaw], February 2, 1959); and condemned on the other—by orthodox Communists—as "comparable only to the worst, most crisis-ridden season of the twenty years between the wars," (*Tygodnik Zachodni* [Poznan], September 6, 1958).

There was considerable controversy over the sheer number of plays from the West. In an interview in *Polityka* (Warsaw), December 21, 1957, the Stalinist writer Leon Kruczkowski, a member of the cultural commission of the Party Central Committee, complained that 91 percent of the 1957-58 repertory consisted of plays translated from French, English or Italian. Wladyslaw Daszewski of the same commission argued that the count of plays coming from Western sources should be pro-rated over the six war and ten postwar years. "We simply had to make up rather

suddenly for the backlog," he said in the interview. "I think that after a time the repertory will balance itself."

The rush of—and to—Western plays in Poland evoked loud protests from the other Soviet bloc regimes, protests which the Polish enthusiasts laughed off: "It must be purely fortuitous that immediately upon arriving in Warsaw, our charming visitors [from the orbit countries] head for the nearest theater playing Beckett or Ionesco," commented *Teatr i Film* (Warsaw), January 1, 1958. This review maintained that, contrary to prevailing notions, the ratio of Polish to foreign plays on Warsaw stages was roughly the same as before the war (about 52:48), and decried as irrelevant the whole practice of imposing arbitrary "quotas" on the number of foreign vis-a-vis native plays. It warned against the devices of home-based opponents of the Western repertory who employ the argument that the State fund of foreign currency should be reserved for more important things.

Not only the proportion but the character of the plays imported from the West stirred conflict between "liberals" and orthodox critics. Jan Szczepanski, writing in *Trybuna Literacka*, August 17, 1958, championed the principle of a cosmopolitan repertory and wholeheartedly supported the defenders of that policy, particularly the magazine *Dialog*, a new theater and film review edited by "liberals" Jan Kott and A. Tarn. According to Szczepanski, *Dialog* had been attacked by an orthodox critic, Hozenpud, who had charged it with "the systematic propagation of contemporary foreign drama, mostly of decadent authors" and with trying to justify the "supposedly fruitful role of black and pessimistic literature in freeing man from all illusions." Hozenpud had apparently spoken of heated discussions in the editorial offices of *Dialog* on the subject of which foreign or Polish dramatists "present most deeply and fully the problem of non-existence" and which "exceeds his rivals in cynicism and lack of faith in man."

"Nice things go on at that *Dialog*!" commented Szczepanski; "it sounds almost like a black mass!" The reality was far more prosaic, he asserted: while the magazine had made some mistakes in its translation policy (in 1956-57 only three Soviet plays were translated and published in

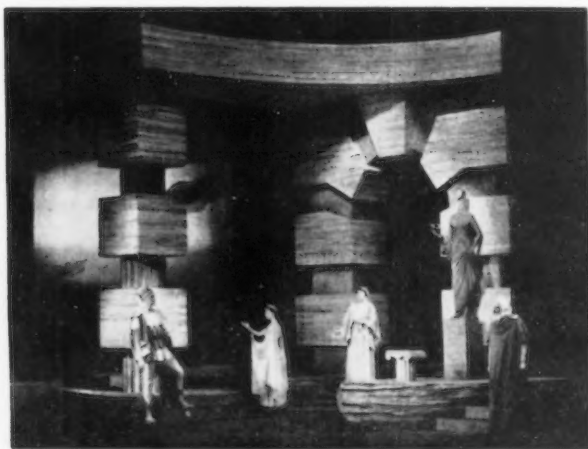
the magazine), no more than a few of the translated plays could be considered nihilistic. He also parried the arguments of the periodical *Zwiewka* which had attacked Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Montherlant's *Port Royal*, and the works of Beckett and Ionesco.

At the beginning of 1958, there were seventeen Western plays on the Polish stage. No Soviet plays had been staged for over a year. Of the five American plays, the most popular was the Cole Porter musical *Kiss Me Kate*, whose original number of scheduled performances had to be expanded to accommodate the demand. Of the West European plays, Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* aroused the greatest interest and attracted a large public. Altogether there were 449 premieres (first Polish productions) on the Polish stage in 1957, 256 of them foreign. The largest proportion of these were from France (87), England (47) and Italy (24).

The Stalinist Theater and After

PLAYS OF WESTERN or "bourgeois" origin had been dropped from Polish repertories in 1949, at the time of the Obory Conference which forcibly introduced "Socialist realism" to the Polish theater (it was the theatrical equivalent of the Szczecin Writers' Conference.) At the Obory Conference it was reported that out of more than 200 plays produced in Poland between 1945 and 1949, only six had "Socialist" themes; one year later—in 1950—out of twenty new plays produced, all but one had Party themes. "The liquidation of so-called 'bourgeois tripe,' conducted bureaucratically and on a mass scale . . . left the [theater-goers] with feelings comparable to those which would assail our multitude of alcoholics if their liquor supply were to be cut off," wrote *Teatr* (Warsaw) on August 1, 1956. In the thaw of 1955-56 the reaction was violent. In the theater world the rebels made no bones about their intentions: "We are attempting to discard practically everything created in our theater in the last ten years." (*Teatr*, April 15, 1956.) This included the cumbersome administration of theaters by State agencies which hobbled them with restrictions. Budgets were rigid, with expenditures for each item of expense—salaries, props, publicity, etc.—predetermined, and sums could not be transferred from one category to another.

Przegląd Kulturalny, January 10, 1957, said that, until then, theater budgets were so circumscribed that if, for example, the funds for music or extras were exhausted by the middle of the season, the play was obliged to close, even if it was drawing full houses, while a play which followed its budget exactly remained open even though no one went to see it. "The point was that no one should overstep the established limits," said *Przegląd Kulturalny*. "All attempts at individual initiative were liquidated on the spot. . . . This state of affairs paralyzed the administration of the theaters, which came to represent—according to the extremely accurate description coined by the young actors of the Student Satirical Theater—'a cross between technical stagnation and planned deficit.'" Thus the disproportionate rise in State subsidies each year: 1953—8.96 zloty per spectator; 1954—10.15 zloty; 1955—11.58 zloty; ac-



accompanied at the same time by a steady rise in admission prices.

In 1957 there were 138 theatres in Poland, with a total attendance for the year of 10.6 million. (*Głos Nauczycielski* [Warsaw], April 27, 1958.) State subsidies to the theaters amounted to 165.5 million *złoty* in 1957 (average subsidy per ticket was 15.73 *złoty*). The Warsaw Satirical Theater received the smallest subsidy, less than a *złoty* per spectator. The Nowa Huta Theater received 38.6 *złoty* per capita, the Polish National Theater in Warsaw 29.65 *złoty*.

Theater administration was decentralized in 1958: the Central Theater Bureau in Warsaw, set up during the Stalin era, was liquidated at the beginning of 1959 and all theaters put under the jurisdiction of the local national councils. Censorship has never been formally relinquished; theaters are required to obtain the approval of the Office of Press and Theater Control to stage any play (even if it is well-known and has been performed before). However, the exercise of censorship between 1956 and 1958 was greatly relaxed (it stayed considerably stricter in the provinces than in Warsaw). Under the new decentralized administration, repertory is selected by the individual theaters, rather than issued to them by the central Theater Bureau. The repertory plan and budget is submitted first to the local national council and for final approval to the Ministry of Culture and Art.

New Polish Plays

IN 1957-58 THE POLISH theaters were virtually "on their own," at least in choosing what to present, and the results of this freedom were, according to *Nowa Kultura*, February 2, 1958, that "on the one hand there were theaters whose only concern was earnings and which relied on tried-and-true prewar tastes; on the other hand were the plays and shows which insistently intruded into contemporary Polish life. And it seems that these were the ones which attracted audiences and made money."

While the current Polish theater is undoubtedly much influenced by the Western theater, its vital nerve is lodged in a distinctively Polish tradition: political satire. Mockery of their oppressors, as well as themselves, is one of the Poles' favorite forms of entertainment, and the Polish satirical theater has performed this function with skill and relish. It flourished underground during the Nazi Occupation, and became an active force during the ferment of 1954-56. At this time small satirical cabarets sprang up spontaneously throughout the country, organized by and catering to young intellectuals. Many were part of—even the final form of—the famed intelligentsia clubs of this period, which agitated for political and economic reforms. At the same time, the cabaret theaters espoused artistic and philosophical movements—existentialism, abstractionism—which were coming into Poland from the West. Reviewing this period, the March 1958 issue of the now-abolished Cracow student paper *Zebra* said: "The youth were revolutionary not only in what they said, but how they said it. A feeling for the stage, bold and stripped-down staging . . . were viewed at the time as a considerable theatrical advance."

The semi-amateur satirical cabarets played their most important role alongside the press during the ferment and October 1956 revolution. But by the end of 1957, as the Gomulka regime moved to curb public criticism of conditions and policies, these theatrical groups turned away from politics to more purely artistic forms of entertainment, and by the end of 1958, many of them were extinct. (The premises of the famous "Cellar" cabaret in Cracow were recently taken over by the ZMS, the new Party youth organization.)

"The Police"

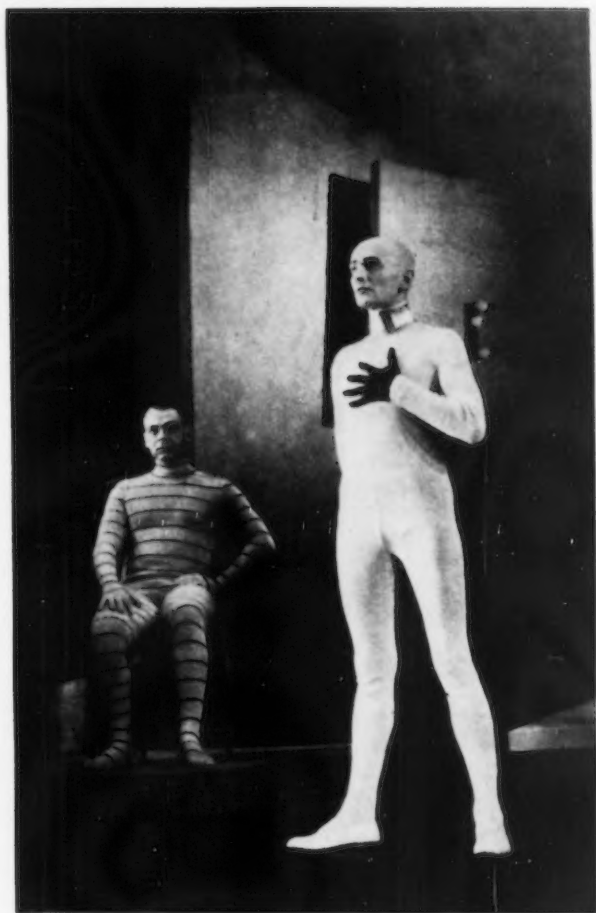
It was out of this tradition and spirit that there flowered Poland's current leading hit: a full-fledged satirical comedy by Sławomir Mrożek staged by the Warsaw Dramatic Theater in 1958 (see *East Europe*, May 1959, for the full text of this play). *The Police* is a broad, at times farcical, take-off on the mechanisms of a police State. Despite the author's tongue-in-cheek disclaimer that "the play does not contain anything apart from what it contains,"* and its setting in an "anonymous country," the audiences, according to *Przegląd Kulturalny*, August 28, 1958, react immediately to its implications. "It is full of contemporary jargon . . . one is compelled automatically to interpret the play in the light of the present-day situation."

After a long run to packed houses in Warsaw, *The Police* is scheduled to be staged in several Western countries this year. Another contemporary Polish play to have made a mark in the West is Roman Brandstaetter's *Silence*. This was suppressed in Poland in the summer of 1958 (following Gomulka's speech at Gdansk in which he brought Poland into line with the rest of the Soviet bloc on a number of political issues: Yugoslavia, the execution of Imre Nagy). The play was produced in Vienna in 1958, and opened in Stockholm in February 1959, where the premiere reportedly was given a standing ovation. It may be said that these are the first plays from Eastern Europe since it fell into the Soviet orbit to have aroused the interest and enthusiasm of Western theater circles.

Party Crackdown

In the fall of 1958, the Gomulka regime started tightening up all along the cultural line. Newspapermen, writers, editors, publishers, film and theater personnel—all those engaged in the propagation of news, opinion and ideas—were sternly warned that they must cease criticizing regime policy, support the Party, and realign their thinking with Marxist-Leninist ideology. The theater was distinctly included in this drive. A conference of Party members in the Warsaw theater—stage managers, set designers, directors and critics—took place on January 15 and was addressed by Minister of Culture and Art Tadeusz Galinski, who has been one of the regime's chief spokesmen for the new program. *Trybuna Ludu*, January 16, said that this was the first of a series of such conferences, aimed at reactivating the work of the Party organizations in the theater.

* In the introduction to the published text, *Dialog* (Warsaw), No. 6, 1958.



A scene from "Claudius," one of the three one-act plays composing the work called "The Names of Power," by the young Polish playwright Jerzy Broszkiewicz. Both in its staging and its writing, the Polish theater is the only truly "experimental" one in the Soviet bloc.

Photo from *Poland* (Warsaw), No. 5, 1958

Since in the theater there is a considerable lag between the recipe and the finished product, the new restrictions, which will probably mean a reduction in the number of Western plays and less regime tolerance toward plays like *The Police*, will not be noticeable until next season. Meantime, the theater fare continues along the lines of last year: in the middle of the 1958-59 season some of the leading plays in Warsaw had been Kafka's *The Trial*, Brecht's *Threepenny Opera*, Durrenmat's *The Visit*, Mrozek's *The Police*, Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Wouk's *The Caine Mutiny*. 500 premieres were scheduled for 1958-59, a considerable increase over the previous year. Of the foreign plays, first place was again held by French contemporary drama (42 premieres) and second place by English. There were to be 19 premieres of new Polish plays. (*Trybuna Ludu*, November 29, 1958).

In Cracow, the leading cultural center in the country after Warsaw, a production of *The Caine Mutiny* has been

a great success. According to *Trybuna Ludu*, January 21, 1959, the Cracow theater offers first-rate productions of Polish, Russian, French, American and German plays, "everything . . . with the exception, perhaps, of the contemporary works of Polish and Soviet writers. . . . However, this is not only true of Cracow," the paper added.

Another recent hit is a dramatization under the title *State of Emergency* of Albert Camus' novel "The Plague," presented at the People's Theater in Nowa Huta. The critic in *Przegląd Kulturalny* (Warsaw), December 6, 1958, called it a "passionate, biting protest against . . . the totalitarian institutions which physically and morally crush the individual . . . [and] an equally passionate defense of democratic institutions, especially those connected with individual liberties." The critic noted that "the Nowa Huta People's Theater is sold out for three weeks in advance. Even your reviewer had to get his ticket from a scalper. . . ."

Romania

THE WAR OF ATTRITION between Romanian intellectuals and the regime has circled around Romanian stages, if not erupted upon them. The conflict can be attributed less to any extremism in Romanian theatrical trends than to the narrowing and hardening of the Party's demands. But while there has been no Romanian equivalent of Poland's *The Police* or Hungary's *Galilei*—that is, no dramatized attack on Party rule; and the taste in Western drama runs not to Beckett but to Anouilh, the Party holds that the Romanian theater has bungled its political tasks and succumbed to infectious "revisionism." The restoration of the "bourgeois" ideal of entertainment and art for art's sake has brought about a preoccupation with stage technique rather than dramatic message. Playwrights share in the Romanian writers' imputed crime of escaping from current social problems into the pre-Communist past. Critics, publishers, stage directors and theater managers—all those who select and judge—are guilty of applying non-Party, "objectivist" standards and of harboring an unhealthy interest in the contemporary Western theater.

This ominous drift was to be checked summarily, and reversed, according to the plans adopted at a plenum of the Party Central Committee held June 9-13, 1958. (The plenum was preceded by a conference of cultural officials held by the Party Central Committee on May 30-31.) At the regularly scheduled theater workers' conference held in July, and in numerous press articles during the summer, every aspect of the theater—repertory selection, content of scripts, methods of staging, and the tenor and direction of drama criticism—was called to account.

In an editorial on "Theater and the Party Spirit," *Teatrul* (Bucharest), May 1958, scored the "visible poverty of [Socialist] themes" in the more than 20 new plays staged in the 1957-58 season. The editorial traced this to the previous annual theater conference in July 1957, at which, it said, the concept of "the art of entertainment had attempted to assert its dainty presence." This, said *Teatrul*, was an implied invitation to return to the so-called pure artistic act: "Artistic creation 'liberated' from we don't

know what kind of oppression by life's reality, by our convictions and our political orientation—all these things, it seems, being alien to beauty. . . ."

The paper spoke of intense discussions—"not always in public"—about the dramatic values of the West. With the exception of the "literature of the 'absurd'" (presumably existentialist drama), the paper said that Western plays, with their criticism of bourgeois institutions, are of value to the Romanian public, but they should not dominate the repertory. Despite all indications to the contrary, the paper claimed that a genuine Socialist realist drama was developing alongside the "literature, however brilliant, of Pagnol, Giraudoux, Anouilh, which some stage directors and connoisseurs regard with such rapture." Admittedly, however, this new drama was "as yet, a modest and inconspicuous one."

The editorial warned: "The hostile wind of revisionism, which blows continuously, is no violent wind [but] the fight against [it] is as important as the fight against the obvious class enemy. We must strengthen our conviction that our art, with all that is valuable, glorious, and lasting in it, owes its properties to the directives of the Party."

Subsequent criticism, much sterner in tone (particularly after the June Party Plenum), refuted this hopeful view of the prospects of Socialist realist drama. In fact, playwrights, directors and theater managements appeared to be joined in a sort of internal defection from Communist "contemporary reality." In the selection of themes, the makeup of repertories and the interpretation of scripts, they had reverted to pre-Communist models and values.

The Mode of Evasion

As elsewhere in the Soviet bloc, theater managements were charged with a number of evasive and politically "irresponsible" practices. The principal theaters of Bucharest, particularly the National Theater, were said to have made no effort to put on new Socialist realist plays but instead presented plays from the classical and bourgeois repertory, pleading financial necessity. They produce "unplanned"—unscheduled—plays and relegate the required minimum of Socialist realist plays to the end of the season. (*Teatrul*, May 1958; *Contemporanul*, June 6, 1958.)

At the theater conference, which took place on July 1-2, it was reported that the 1957-58 repertory included 36 Romanian plays, of which 17 were "contemporary," and 28 Soviet plays. Although there has been much general criticism of the plays from the West, no figures have been given and few names named. *The Diary of Anne Frank*, produced by the Satu Mare Theater in Cluj in late 1957, was well received. At the conference, the Bucharest National Theater and the State Theater of Timisoara were upbraided for having staged unscheduled performances of Anouilh's *Invitation to the Castle*, a play said to "propagate class conciliation" and divert attention from the true face of capitalism. "It is definitely dangerous," said the report, "to include in the repertory plays which try to rehabilitate the bourgeoisie, which make concessions to foreign ideology." (*Teatrul*, August 1958.) Party playwright Lucia Demetrius, writing in *Gazeta Literara* (Bucharest), July 10, 1958, said that the 1957-58 repertory was characterized



Nina Andrycz, a leading Polish actress, in the title role of Slowacki's classic "Mary Stuart." Miss Andrycz is, in private life, the wife of the Premier of Poland, Josef Cyrankiewicz.

Photo from *Poland* (Warsaw), No. 10, 1958

by "weak and confused plays leading nowhere" and foreign plays which, apart from the cachet of being foreign, brought nothing new to the public. She said that the staging of such plays not only wasted time, money and human effort but "poisoned the minds of those who come to the theater to enrich themselves morally, to fortify themselves."

Playwrights Denounced

A stinging rebuke was handed to the leading Communist playwrights of the country by the Party organ *Contemporanul* (Bucharest) in its June 20, 1958, issue. The article accused the playwrights of defaulting on contracts for plays made two to three years before, but this was merely the springboard for a far-reaching indictment. The paper said that these very plays, unwritten but outlined in the contracts, were wrongly conceived and should be scrapped. *Contemporanul* said that the Party playwrights had deteriorated, had lost their ideological punch, and were transfixed in gazing backward at classes, people and problems that had no significance in Romania's future:

"We are at the close of a season in which our present drama is distinguished by its lack of actuality or false actuality. . . . [This drama] insistently harps on—and particularly the leading playwrights do—the destiny of the remains of the exploiting classes, deals with moral contrasts (political conflicts hardly at all) between the

representatives of this class and the working class, details the persistence of the 'old' and the psychology of the 'new', etc. . . . As though the essence of our concern at the present moment was the destiny of the bourgeois elements rather than the danger they represent in the efforts of the construction of Socialism."

The paper recalled the earlier works of the Communist playwrights, which were cited as powerful representations of "Party positions": *The Miners* and *City of Fire* by Davidoglu; *The Balance* and *The New Food* by Lucia Demetrius, and other early Socialist realist plays by Baranga, Moraru, Lovinescu. Since then, the paper lamented, "it is a downhill road along which, we do not understand why, their creative work goes, year by year, play by play. The weapons which we associated with them until the other day seem to have been replaced by a popgun."

The playwrights were instructed again to "face forward and upward." Their deviation from the terms of their contracts might on this occasion prove fortunate, on condition that the very themes called for in the contracts be reworked.

Criticism and Critics

REGIME CRITICISM of the current Romanian plays, while sharp, tended to be rather general. An exception—



Janina Traczyk, who played the lead in the very successful Polish production of the American play "The Diary of Anne Frank."

Photo from *Poland* (Warsaw), No. 7, 1957

perhaps singled out to serve an example—was a play called *What Kind of Man Are You?* by Ana Novacs, one of the "contemporary" plays in last year's repertory. It was denounced at the theater conference, and *Contemporanul*, Aug. 15, 1958, charged that it "misrepresents the new reality . . . and denies the achievements of the people's regime." According to the March 16, 1958, issue of *Scinteia*, (Bucharest) the play is set in a "Socialized" factory and shows a conflict between the Communist manager, who wishes to expand the enterprise and raise production, and the workers, who consider this against their own interests. This, said *Scinteia*, is a fallacious picture because the millions of workers in Romania understand that the only basis for improving living standards is the expansion of the economy. The characterization of the manager is also flawed: he is depicted as an old-time Communist fighter who, under the pressure of the workers' criticism, breaks down, takes to drink, is overcome by "fits of petty-bourgeois hysteria" and succumbs to doubts about the cause for which he has fought all his life.

Drama Critics Attacked

Drama critics and their press were severely taken to task for failing to provide the ideological guidance with which Marxist-Leninist theory charges them. Particularly out of line was *Teatrul*, the main theater review. "It would be putting it generously to say that *Teatrul*, at least in the first five issues of 1958, has been far removed from the problems of our theatrical movement," said *Rominia Libera*, June 13, 1958.

The review was accused of neglecting the Romanian "contemporary" drama and dwelling too lovingly on the contemporary theater of the West. Why, for instance—*Rominia Libera* demanded—did an essay by director Sica Alexandrescu not discuss "the ideological rout manifested in our repertory and stage direction of recent years" instead of the "technicalities" of the Dutch and Belgian theater? Even the reporting on the Western theater is ideologically disoriented, said the paper, citing an article on "Tendencies in American Dramaturgy" by Mircea Alexandrescu, which "proves upon close reading to be a careful evasion of the core of the subject . . . [emphasizing] only the business aspects of the American theater, which, in a theater of moral decadence and warmongering propaganda, is a relatively minor evil."

Contemporanul pressed the attack in its July 11, 1958 issue. The paper said that "ill-concealed attacks against Socialist realism" had appeared in *Teatrul* and that its drama criticism rested on a neutral "objectivist" rather than a militant Marxist position. *Teatrul's* January 1958 issue, appearing "in the middle of a theater season conspicuous for insipid, melodramatic, empty plays, wrote about nothing but historical drama and the dialectical creation and perspectives of the Italian theater!" *Contemporanul* added that when the review did take up actual problems, its comments were general and shallow.

The pillorying of the magazine was carried on in the pages of *Teatrul* itself, in the report on the theater conference published in August 1958. After quoting criticism

made at the conference, the article said that despite "repeated warnings from readers," and even from the Central Committee organ *Scinteia*, *Teatrul* had continued to appear month after month "with the same indifference toward its duty, devoid of class combativity and displaying a conciliatory attitude toward bourgeois theory." The slowness with which the magazine was beginning to correct its

errors was ascribed by the article to "the superficial way in which the review's management had admitted these errors and practiced self-criticism."

The article then turned on the theater section of *Contemporanul* for having published "objectivist" pieces and for failing to take a strong stand against the ideologically defective performances and plays; indeed, "sometimes it has acted to the contrary by praising them."

Contemporanul, September 12, returned the fire to *Teatrul* by charging the former *Teatrul* editor Horia Deleanu with responsibility for diverting the focus of criticism in the periodical from "the dramatic text to the performance, from ideas to the technique of their expression, from content to form." This heresy of formalism appears to have taken particular hold in the Romanian theater.

The Party organ *Scinteia* tentatively received *Teatrul* back into the fold. Evaluating *Teatrul's* September issue, *Scinteia*, November 4, 1958, said that the theatrical review had made "a visible effort to overcome its defects and raise the ideological level of its items."

"A Letter on Poles"

An unsigned article in *Polityka* (Warsaw), August 30, 1958. In an introductory note the editors of the paper claim that the article is a reprint of a chapter from a book published in England. As neither the title, the name of the author nor the publisher is given, this is believed to be a stratagem to avoid official reprisals.

IF A POLE goes to the theater it is not because he hopes to enjoy himself. His aims are on a higher level and can be enumerated as follows: (1) a Pole goes to the theater to strengthen his patriotic feelings and the cult of blunders committed by the Poles in the past; (2) to find out how the latest change in the post of manager or producer has contributed to the success or failure of the play; (3) to find out what is the present policy of the government, this being deduced from the choice of plays, the character of the scenery, the kind of musical illustration; (4) to give vent to the urge to grumble, a characteristic which draws them near to the French; (5) to realize how far behind the West the Poles lag.

"The Poles like the theater and treat it as a festivity; that is why theater buffets in Poland are so poorly stocked. Polish patriotic plays are mostly of an historical character; contemporary Polish plays, on the whole of a very low standard, become patriotic after a certain length of time. Most patriotic plays are very boring. Yet those who do not patronize patriotic plays incur the risk of being ostracized by cultured society.

"The Poles manifest their enthusiasm for patriotic plays by sending them to theatrical festivals abroad. The Poles like to laugh and are proud of it; they consider all other nations gloomy and incapable of matching jokes with the Poles. Yet the Polish sense of humor is peculiar and often puzzles foreigners: for instance, at the recent production of a contemporary comedy [in Poland] the spectators roared with laughter at such lines as 'Our railroads are still very poor,' or 'The situation in agriculture is rather complicated.'

"The Poles say that they like plays of the abstract type, free from political or ideological propaganda; in fact, they always try to root out political allusions and metaphors in them. Therefore those Polish playwrights who are keen on applause lard their plays with incomprehensible phrases, to avoid clarity at any price."

Directors Sabotage Scripts

Stage directors and designers, faced with dispiriting scripts, have apparently tried to enliven the stage by unorthodox means such as altering the characterizations called for by the text and creating bold effects with props, lighting, and sets. Since in the Socialist realist theater the primacy of the script is considered absolute, the regime critics consider their activities highly subversive.

L. Demetrius, in *Gazeta Literara*, July 10, 1958, warned that the director and set designer must not deviate from Socialist realism, although she stressed that the "fantasy, boldness, novelty in methods, about which we have spoken in the past two years" should be redirected, not stifled. *Scinteia*, November 1, complained that some directors "with a faulty conception of originality in art have tried to introduce new forms of expression into the stage creation, without concern for the theme and idea, distorting the characters of the heroes and implicitly the actors' interpretations." *Scinteia* scored the exaggerated use of technical devices, citing director Valeriu Moiescu's staging of *The Barefoot Bride* at the Galati State Theater. Theater critics and stage directors were linked together in their wayward enthusiasm: "The frivolous zeal of certain theater critics for formal, useless artifice . . . doesn't help young stage directors, and can set them sliding on the slope of formalism."

Contemporanul, October 31, added its criticism of stage directors who, by using loud music, tricky lighting effects, etc., drown the message of the play in an "excess of theatricality."

In the same vein, performers are guilty of seeking roles which demonstrate their acting skill, indifferent to the significance in "class" terms of the character they portray, and thus departing from the original intention of the text. *Munca* (Bucharest), August 28, 1958, reproved the Constanta Theater for the "vulgar and tasteless improvisation of certain actors" which had destroyed the didactic



A production at the Pitesti State Theater, in Romania. Pitesti is a provincial town of some 40,000 inhabitants; its State Theater was formed in 1948 from the local amateur trade union dramatic group. Seen above is "The Hurricane," a pre-World War I historical drama by Barbu Delavrancea.

Photo from *Rumania Today* (Bucharest), No. 2, 1958

character of the play. *Contemporanul*, October 31, commended the cast of the Bucharest Municipal Theater in *The Golden Crop* and that of the Railway Theater in *The Small Estate Owners of Bogdan* for depicting the working peasant of today as "a complex man, with a rich spiritual life, engaged in contemporary events, strong in his decisions, moderate but firm in opposing the class enemy." On the other hand, the actors of the Bacau Theater in the play *The Awful Tempest* portrayed the peasant as "a primitive, infected by superstition and archaic fears, obtuse, mystic," etc.

There has been little written in their defense by the dissidents, since the regime does not recognize their right to a hearing in the rigidly controlled press. However, an eloquent protest was registered by one of Romania's best known stage directors, Siegfried Wolfinger, when he defected to the West with his wife, the painter and stage designer Cella Voinescu, while in Paris in May, 1958.

Wolfinger had received seven awards from the Romanian Communist regime, including the title of Laureate of the State Prize, First Class, the highest State decoration.

1958-59 Developments

THE LIST OF plays scheduled for presentation in the 1958-59 season was published in *Rominia Libera*, July 31, 1958, which emphasized that the basic idea is a "mili-

tant, Party-minded repertory . . . which will serve to form the Socialist consciousness of the new man." Over 180 plays not previously performed were scheduled. Contemporary Romanian plays predominated with works by old Socialist realist stalwarts such as Aurel Baranga, Davidoglu, Lucia Demetrius. The paper said that special attention would be given to Soviet plays not yet produced in Romania, plus 48 world classics: Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Racine, Goethe, Shaw.

A flurry of rewriting evidently preceded the opening of the new season. *Contemporanul*, November 21, 1958, mentioned *The Great Hurricane*, by Mihail Davidoglu, a revision of a play presented last year. According to *Contemporanul*, the new version "exposes the conflicts and dramatic experiences of some shepherds in a cheese-dairy cooperative. The play has a powerful mystical quality."

It seemed that not all the dramatists understood their task so well. It was stated that a number of plays presented in the 1957-58 season have been dropped from the repertory because of ideological and artistic shortcomings.

Toward the end of the 1958-59 season, the Romanian stage apparently succumbed to the Party pressure, with the untoward result that theater attendance began at once to decline. *Scinteia* (Bucharest), April 21, 1959, blamed this on the "passive attitude" of the theaters, which "limit themselves to formally fulfilling their contracts" instead of presenting their productions with enthusiasm.

Bulgaria

THE THEATER IN Bulgaria appeared by late 1957 to have sunk into a state of advanced debility. In an effort to inject new life into it, the regime called for a nation-wide "review" of Bulgarian drama throughout 1959 to stimulate the creation and production of new "Socialist plays" by discussions and contests. Prizes will be awarded to the best plays published or performed between April 9, 1957, and September 9, 1959. The Bulgarian Writers' Union drama section will hold a plenum to evaluate the trends in contemporary Bulgarian drama and to reappraise prewar works in the repertory from the "contemporary" (Marxist-Leninist) point of view. All theaters are expected to stage more and better performances of contemporary plays.

The announcement of this decree in *Teatrul* (Sofia), April 1958 issue, was apparently greeted with pervasive langor. On August 14, *Literaturen Front* (Sofia) queried: "How are the Ministry of Culture, the Krustiu Sarafov Theater [the leading State theater in Sofia] and the theaters throughout the country preparing for the forthcoming review? So far only with wishes." The paper said that this had also been the fate of the last theater review held in 1952. "Six years have gone by since then, and the conclusion reached at that time [that more interest be shown in contemporary Bulgarian drama] turned into a beautiful but empty declaration. . . . The essence of the matter is that the Bulgarian theaters do not consider the staging of [new] Bulgarian plays as their foremost task."

Literaturen Front disclosed and deplored the lack of a response to an appeal to Bulgarian playwrights published in the press on July 19 and signed by a group of directors and producers, which called for the creation of dramatic works "reflecting the heroic toil of the Bulgarian masses," etc. According to the paper, the appeal sounded like "a document composed in a kneeling position," and its fulsome



"The Rainmaker," by the American playwright Richard Nash, as produced in Bucharest's Municipal Theater Studio. The play has been very popular in Eastern Europe.

Photo from *Rumania Today* (Bucharest), No. 8, 1957



A scene from "Chutna Jana," the Bulgarian play that has been strongly criticized by the regime. It is a glorification of the old peasant virtues and a condemnation of contemporary city dwellers.

Photo from *Teatr* (Sofia), No. 3, 1958

slogans failed to elicit a reaction. *Literaturen Front* suggested that the appeal had been something less than heartfelt. Many directors, it said, believe that the Bulgarian drama "is a shallow sea for their artistic capacities, which reach only for the heights and depths of Shakespeare, Moliere and Dostoevsky."

As in Czechoslovakia and Romania, the theaters are bypassing the contemporary Socialist-realist plays and filling their repertories with revivals of the classics. According to *Narodna Kultura* (Sofia), the Krustiu Theater has presented only one new Bulgarian play a season for the past four years, while the theaters in Russe, Vrasta, Dimitrograd and other towns have not even presented that many. In the cultural directives issued by the Bulgarian Party Seventh Congress in June 1958, it was stipulated that Bulgarian plays with "contemporary" themes must predominate in theater repertories. Radio Sofia said on October 27 that this requirement would be met in the 1958-59 repertory: of 170 plays scheduled, 86 were Bulgarian, 60 of them on "contemporary themes." However, prescriptions for volume were more easily filled than those for quality. "The new plays lack force and contemporary spirit," said *Otechestven Front*, October 16, adding mournfully "Where is the strong, vivid contemporary Bulgarian comedy?"

All of this added up to the recognition that the contemporary Bulgarian play is dull, and therefore ineffectual. As pointed out by *Otechestven Front*, November 10, 1957, the theaters are held responsible for both the artistic merit and the ideological correctness of the new plays they stage, and their unwillingness to assume such a responsibility explains why they do not produce the new plays until after the reviews—i.e., the verdict of the regime.

Early Ferment

THE REASONS FOR the lack of development in the Bulgarian theater are well known, though disavowed by the regime. They were aired during the general ferment which agitated Bulgarian literary circles in 1956-57. At this time it was possible, under the guise of permitted criticism of the cult of personality, for playwrights and directors openly to

attack heavy-handed administrative methods, Party formulas, and censorship in the theater. During a discussion held by the Writers' Union drama section (*Literaturen Front*, October 25, 1956), playwright Kamen Zidarov cited "a serious crisis in the contemporary Bulgarian theater"; its most telling manifestation was the evaporation of theater audiences. Discontent was aggravated by the visits of two foreign theater companies in 1956. The style of the French company's performances, and the eclectic repertory (including Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams) of the Belgrade State Theater from Yugoslavia, cast a particularly bad light on the permitted "Socialist-realist" school.

The Case of Chutna Jana

The most recent play to stir the rather stagnant waters of the Bulgarian theater was *Chutna Jana* by Slacho Krasinski, which was produced in the Spring of 1958 at the Trudov Front Theater in Sofia, the National Theater in Plovdiv, and other provincial theaters. The play was a tremendous popular success, and was violently condemned by the Party. *Septemvri*, November 1958, in a strongly worded criticism of the play, admitted that "if we classify the Sofia plays [of 1957-58] in terms of the sensation they made during the past season, first place would unquestionably go to *Chutna Jana*. . . . The production had a tremendous success and attracted a large public, and the Trudov theater overfulfilled its financial plan."

Chutna Jana's ideological defect appears to be that it

glorified the old "unreconstructed" peasant life and virtues at the expense of the "new man," and exacerbated the differences between town and country and peasants and the intelligentsia. *Literaturen Front*, March 6, 1958, commented at length on the play:

"For some time, there has been much talk of how *Chutna Jana* is a work of 'great talent' and a model of contemporary drama. What are the artistic qualities of *Chutna Jana*? . . . The play represents our life in the following light: the old peasant woman Jana loses her husband. Only hours after his burial, her three sons—a doctor, a professor and a composer who have come from the city—try to get her property away from her and . . . drive her out of the house. . . . Krasinski makes the point that the three brothers are products of our contemporary city life, that this is the image of today's intelligentsia. The thesis is plain—the city turns people into greedy egotists, opportunists, hooligans . . . pure human relations exist only in the village and only among the old people who were born and have lived all their lives there . . . Krasinski's attitude toward the 'new man' is no different even when he comes from the village or lives there. Ilia, the chairman of the village council, presents himself to the audience with a few words . . . which expose him as unstable and lacking in character.

"This is how the much-praised author of *Chutna Jana* understands today's reality. He has not omitted any opportunity to spit on . . . the intelligentsia, the city and the 'new village.'"

The Dramatist's Dilemma in Poland

LET US RETURN to one good habit of Stalinist times: complaints about the inferior nature of our theater repertory. . . .

During the period of "Socialist realism," Polish dramaturgy was the concern of all. More, everyone was duty-bound to be concerned: the authors (these, by the way, less than anyone else) because they wrote the plays; Ministry officials, because they had to evaluate and correct them; theater administrations, because they were also required to correct them . . . and finally, the critics and the public, because they had to discuss the plays, uncover various inconsistencies and errors in them, propose better solutions, and determine what was "typical" and what was not. During its years of peak efficiency this apparatus might have been likened to an infernal machine, whose over-size and clangorous flails were being used for the purpose of grinding a small sheaf of wispy hay. Everyone, of course, was disgusted with all this; and when the possibility of some relaxation appeared on the horizon, there was a general rush to take advantage of it.

At present we have arrived at the other extreme. Contemporary Polish drama is the concern of no one. Not the authors (because they don't write them), nor the officials (because they don't correct them), nor the theater administrations (because they don't stage them), nor the critics nor the public.

[Our playwrights] translate foreign plays, write reviews, edit. . . . Would it be possible to name just one contemporary Polish author whose sole means of support is playwriting? They manage as best they can, usually with the aid of these sidelines. . . .

The Polish playwright must live with the constant conviction that everything and everyone has conspired against him. The censorship conditions (I do not even have in mind the official Control Office, but all those social circumstances which make it still difficult to gather up enough courage to tackle certain subjects) affect the dramatist most; his civic integrity alone requires him to practice extreme caution and deliberation when writing words that by now may elicit no particular reaction when printed in a newspaper, but which may become a veritable lighted fuse when uttered on the stage. Add to this the current snobbery, the rage for foreign imports, and you have yet another extremely unfavorable factor working against our playwrights. Finally, the lack of interest on the part of theaters and publishers—concerned only with "fast-selling" material—as well as critics, makes it impossible for the playwright to derive from his work either its moral or material reward. And one must be truly and deeply convinced of the positive value of one's work to persist against such obstacles.

Excerpts from an article in *Teatr* (Warsaw),
March 15, 1957.

These comments were repeated and amplified in the rest of the press. *Narodna Kultura*, March 22, 1958, said the play failed to show that the shortcomings are "an alien element in our [essentially] sound social atmosphere"; on the contrary, the author "stresses their organic connection with contemporary practice." *Teater*, May 5, 1958, said that Krasinski's version of contemporary life is false, and declared that there is no returning to "the old patriarchal village life about which Krasinski is so enthusiastic."

Production Off

The Bulgarian regime does not release figures on State financial support of the theater, but, as elsewhere in the bloc, the regime is trying to streamline and "rationalize" its operation. Excluding opera and concert halls, there are now over 35 State and local theaters (about one per 150,000 population), all under the Ministry of Culture. This represents a large increase over the prewar number (from five to 12). But while the number of performers in the various theater companies then averaged 15 to 22, it is now from one and a half to two times higher.* *Literaturen Front*, July 11, 1958, stressed that this was not the result of an increased number of productions; on the contrary, the paper said, the theaters now produce fewer plays. At present the average is from four to twelve a season, while before the war they used to present 15 to 25. The National

* Salaries in the Bulgarian theater are: actor with a title of merit (highest category)—2,800 leva monthly; average salary for actors and producers—1,100 leva; directors, 1,800 leva. In addition they receive priorities and privileges in apartment space, etc. The average industrial worker's wage is about 550 leva.

Theater in Russe, for example, mounted 25 plays in 1936-37 and only ten in 1956-57.

According to *Literaturen Front*, a few performers are overloaded with roles, while the majority are idle most of the time.** This was attributed to the "lack of ability" of many of the cast members. The paper called for a purge of actors "without the necessary ideological and professional training" and a better utilization of the graduates of the theatrical schools.

Conclusion

DURING THE BRIEF period of the "thaw", the theatrical profession and audiences in Eastern Europe exposed the bankruptcy of the much-heralded "revolutionary" Communist theater. They looked to the Western theater for dramatic life, originality and inspiration, and made clear their preference for entertainment and honest social comment over the rigid posturing of the "Socialist-realist" drama. Now the regimes have undertaken the delicate task of reasserting Party domination of the stage without falling into the self-defeating practices of the Stalin era. In the theater, the basic artistic dilemma of the Communists is dramatized: how to achieve the whole-hearted participation of artists and their public in their own ideological enslavement. The formula has not yet been found.

** *Literaturen Front* said that actresses were particularly in oversupply, and revealed the following peculiarity of the Socialist realist play: in the classical repertory the average ratio of male to female roles is two to one, while in the "contemporary" repertory it is three or four to one. There was no explanation for this mysterious trend.



At the Drama Theater in Warsaw, film clips are taken of the rehearsals of Christopher Fry's "The Lady's Not For Burning."

Photo from *Poland* (Warsaw), No. 12, 1958

Texts and Documents

TWO FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENTS

While the Soviet Foreign Minister was negotiating with the Western powers at Geneva, the USSR's East European Satellites supported him with a barrage of statements and speeches echoing Moscow's official line on West Berlin and the question of German unification. When Soviet Premier Khrushchev made his diversionary expedition to Albania, where he hawked the menace of US military bases in Italy and Greece, his words were immediately taken up by the press and radio of the Satellites. Below are two examples culled from many: a Czechoslovak pronouncement on Germany (Radio Prague, June 12) and an Albanian statement on US missile bases (Radio Tirana, in French to Europe, June 15).

CZECHOSLOVAK STATEMENT ON GERMANY

THE MINISTRY of Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Republic issued a statement June 12 on the problems of easing international tension. Here is the text:

The Foreign Ministers' Conference at Geneva has reached a concluding stage. Questions discussed at this conference are also of vital concern for the interests of Czechoslovakia. From the nature of these questions stems the right of the Czechoslovak Republic to take part in all negotiations between West and East, as well as the intense interest with which the Czechoslovak people and Government follow negotiations at Geneva.

Conference proceedings have shown, says the statement, that the USSR delegation has consistently made untiring efforts to achieve positive results in the negotiations. All of its proposals at the conference were aimed toward this end. Yet, as is known, throughout the negotiations the Western powers have been rejecting a solution on the question of a peace treaty with Germany and the question of West Berlin.

Therefore, the USSR has lately sought a new, genuine basis for further negotiations on these questions. This basis is the Soviet proposal for the establishment of an all-German committee—an idea with which the Western powers at first were in agreement—and for an interim status for West Berlin under which the Soviet Government is willing, for the sake of reaching an agreement, to agree that the so-called occupation rights in West Berlin should be preserved for a year.

A precondition of temporary recognition of the Western powers' occupation rights in West Berlin is that the size of

the armed forces of the Western powers in West Berlin be reduced, hostile propaganda stopped, espionage organizations directed against the GDR and the other Socialist countries abolished and the deployment of atomic and rocket installations prohibited. These Soviet proposals express sincere efforts, despite existing conflicting views, to find a basis for further negotiations for peaceful settlement with Germany and to do at least the minimum that can be done to ease the dangerous and unnatural situation in West Berlin.

Since the Soviet proposals take into account, as much as possible, the attitude of the Western delegations, they can lead to agreement at the conference.

Thus all prerequisites are at hand for the Foreign Ministers' Conference to achieve visible results if all delegations will try to contribute to the same extent toward the success of the negotiations.

West German Rearmament

The Czechoslovak Government holds that under present conditions, when all efforts must be concentrated on improving the dangerous West Berlin situation, nothing should be done, either now or in the near future, to make the situation still worse. Further atomic and rocket armament of the West German army would undoubtedly bring greater deterioration. Such a policy of creating accomplished facts when negotiations are in progress would deepen the differences in the attitudes of West and East—differences which are already widespread—and thus would not only seriously impede continuing progress on a German peace treaty started at Geneva, but would also frustrate the hopes of the world for a peaceful settlement with Germany. It is also clear that before or during a summit conference such steps by the Federal Ger-

man Republic would not help create a favorable atmosphere but would, on the contrary, make the situation worse and aggravate international tensions.

In the interests of European peace and security it is indispensable that the Federal German Republic Government finally give up its policy of militarism and atomic armament and unequivocally enter the road of peaceful coexistence. The Czechoslovak Government holds that the Federal German Government should contribute to creating a favorable atmosphere by pledging to take no measures during negotiations between West and East that would include the program of atomic armament, and by accepting the GDR proposal to refrain—in both German States—from atomic armament and establishment of more rocket bases. The Western powers, too, should support this minimum demand, which is indispensable for negotiations, by a statement saying that they will take no measures that would directly or indirectly help the Federal German Government implement a program of atomic armament, that they will not enlarge the existing forces in West German territory equipped with atomic and rocket weapons, and that they will build no further launching sites for these weapons or complete the construction of sites already begun.

Propaganda Activities

The Czechoslovak Government holds that the Government of the Federal German Republic should help improve the situation in Central Europe and prevent further aggravation of tension by taking resolute measures to stop propaganda against all its neighbors. The Federal German Government recently repeatedly stated that such propaganda does not exist in West Germany.

Such statements are exposed by the fact that in the Federal German Republic a number of revanchist organizations have just intensified activities which they even carry on in other States, as proven by the recent so-called Sudeten German meeting in Vienna. The Government of the Federal German Republic not only takes no measures to prevent the activities of these organizations, but even fails to disavow them and their claims.

The spreading of such propaganda aggravates international tension and creates an atmosphere of mistrust and fear. It is designed to stir up the resettled Germans against the State from which they had been justifiably expelled in accordance with the Potsdam Agreement. . . .

The Czechoslovak Government seeks to

(Continued inside back cover)

Current Developments

AREA

Anti-Yugoslav Offensive Renewed

After a temporary lull in the Soviet bloc's anti-Yugoslav campaign, coinciding with Khrushchev's Albanian junket when he enlisted Yugoslav support for a denuclearized Balkans, the attack has been resumed. The Sarajevo daily, *Oslobodjenje*, June 28, voiced Yugoslav disappointment over the resumption of hostilities: "Although we had not expected any essential change of heart towards Yugoslavia in certain East European countries and by leaders of these countries . . . we had considered the lessening of tension as a positive sign, because objectively it was in line with the relaxation of tension . . . in this part of the world."

The newspaper went on to criticize the Czechoslovak Party organ *Rude Pravo* for "giving the starting signal for the new attacks against our country." *Rude Pravo* (Prague), June 21, had censured Yugoslav Foreign Secretary Koca Popovic for visiting Greece (June 16-21) without saying anything against the possible installation of missile bases on Greek territory (see below). Albanian Party boss Enver Hoxha also came under fire after his interview, published in *Pravda* (Bratislava), June 13, in which he linked "Yugoslav revisionists" with Western "imperialists."

The strongest Yugoslav counterattack was launched by Vice-President Aleksander Rankovic in a speech in Krizevci, July 5. On this occasion he underlined the fact that "the entire world noted an abatement in the campaign against Yugoslavia during the visit of the Soviet . . . delegation to Albania. . . . However, even before a full month had passed it became clear that the campaign had started to assume its old course and old form. Moreover, judging by the violence of the attacks, it seems as if they are trying to make up for what they had let pass. . . . Nevertheless, anyone who supposes that a policy of pressure can force our country to change its . . . domestic and foreign policy is only deceiving himself." (Radio Belgrade, July 5.)

Hungarian Attacks

A lengthy article on "Yugoslav revisionism" in the June issue of the Budapest political review *Tarsadalmi Szemle* ostensibly replied to a May speech of Yugoslav Vice-President Edward Kardelj, who had stated that the Soviet bloc countries were imitating Yugoslav ideas (see *East Europe*, June, p. 39). According to the Hungarian magazine, Kardelj also made the point that "collectivization is not the only means by which a village undergoes a transformation to Socialism, but merely a method which has



A cartoon on the cover of the Hungarian magazine *Ludas Matyi*, May 14, depicting French President De Gaulle and West German Chancellor Adenauer as a couple of Apache dancers in a cabaret. Says De Gaulle: "Even if you beat me, dear, I still adore you."

been an historical necessity in the USSR and China, under particular economic and political conditions. In other words, agricultural collectivization is not the historically necessary means of leading the working peasantry to the Socialist road but merely inevitable if 'the economic forces of Socialism are not sufficient to check capitalist trends arising from the smallholders.'"

Commenting on this view, the article stated: "It is as if Kautsky [German Socialist, 1854-1938, and so-called revisionist] had stepped out of his grave, Kautsky, who . . . prophesied the 'fiasco' of collectivization and Soviet power. It was Kautsky who 'evaluated' collectivization as compulsory collectivization and as nationalization of the peasants, inevitably leading to a fall in production and the 'downfall of Bolshevism.'"

A book on the "dangers of revisionism" was recently published in Hungary. Radio Budapest, July 7, stated that the new book would help Hungarian readers "to acquire a correct picture of revisionism and its perils. Some of the articles are a Marxist criticism of the program of the League of Yugoslav Communists, and these articles show how revisionism leads to bourgeois ideology."

The Zagreb daily, *Vjesnik*, July 6, in reporting the appearance of this book, called the criticism of Yugoslavia "nothing new," but noted that the new anti-Yugoslav at-

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tacks in Hungary "are being warmed up with increasing heat just at the moment when, in the Soviet Union and other countries of the Socialist camp, a broad campaign for a Balkan 'zone of peace' has been started. Do the authors of this cheap . . . attack think that they are creating a desirable and necessary atmosphere for the relaxation of tension in the Balkans?"

Albanian Fulminations

Further attacks on Yugoslav-Greek relations came after Enver Hoxha returned to Albania after his Czechoslovak visit. Speaking at a ceremony in honor of the construction of the Cuke Canal, Hoxha reproached the Yugoslavs for not condemning "the decision of their friends and colleagues in the Greek Government, with whom they agree on all matters, to establish rocket bases on Greek territory. . . . This is a typical revisionist attitude, an anti-Marxist attitude." (Radio Tirana, June 23.)

The Yugoslavs, in turn, replied to these words when the regime spokesman, Drago Kunc, at a press conference, June 26, was asked to comment on the Hoxha speech: "Enver Hoxha's statements demonstrate the continuance of the well-known policy of hostile attacks on Yugoslavia and the inaccurate presentation of Yugoslavia's policy . . . and are at odds with all efforts to improve relations between the Balkan countries." (Radio Belgrade, June 26.)

Cultural and Scientific Relations Continue

An agreement between Poland and Yugoslavia for scientific-technical cooperation for the peaceful uses of atomic energy for 1959-1960 was signed in Belgrade, June 8. (Radio Belgrade, June 8.) In Moscow, July 5, Yugoslavia opened a cultural exhibit of contemporary applied arts,

such as furniture, ceramics, theatrical decorations, etc. (Radio Moscow, July 3).

Even with Bulgaria, a country long in the forefront of the anti-Yugoslav offensive, a brief respite was still possible. According to Radio Sofia, June 22, a fair took place in Savcheto, Bulgaria, near the Yugoslav border, which thousands of Yugoslavs attended.

Czechoslovak-Yugoslav Talks Suspended

A symptom of the deterioration of relations between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia was the rupture of negotiations between the two countries on extending the time limit for Belgrade to utilize 1956 Czechoslovak credits. Radio Belgrade, July 3, accused the Czechoslovak delegation of reversing its previous stand on this matter.

Rocket Bases and the Balkans

After Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev in Albania reintroduced the 1957 Romanian idea for a "summit conference" of Balkan leaders and urged the creation of a Balkan "zone of peace" (see *East Europe*, July, pp. 36-37), the Soviet bloc, led by Bulgaria and Romania, have repeated these suggestions at great length. The NATO countries Greece and Italy have borne the brunt of the propaganda offensive. Even a non-aggression pact between Sofia and Athens was reputedly proposed by the Bulgarian Deputy Foreign Minister, when he stopped off in Athens en route to Cairo, July 2. (*Rabotnichesko Delo* [Sofia], July 3.)

Most hostile in tone were the remarks of Albanian Premier Shehu, who echoed Khrushchev in threatening Italy and Greece with instant retaliation "if their rockets



At the Poznan Trade Fair, Poland, June 7-21. Caption states that the US pavilion (left) "displays only exhibits of everyday articles . . . not always effectively. While the interior of a drug store, cigarette factory or bakery is interesting, that a barber shop, shoemaker's establishment or tailor shop is not at all imposing." The USSR pavilion, on the other hand, "has actually assumed a commercial character, as opposed to the American pavilion." Right: "the latest Soviet passenger car, the 'Czajka.' The Russians also displayed heavy machinery, radio and electrical equipment, optical and precision goods, TV sets and even toys!"

Sviet (Warsaw), June 21, 1959

are ever employed against Albania and the Socialist camp." Although Yugoslavia by and large supported the "zone of peace" proposals, this was not enough for Mehmet Shehu: "We do not understand why . . . the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia said nothing on the occasion of his visit to Greece. Is this not an astonishing attitude? Is this not direct support, so to speak, of the policy of the Greek Government aimed at the installation of rockets in Greece? (Radio Tirana, June 30.)

Warsaw Peace Conference

While the Foreign Ministers' meeting in Geneva recessed, the Soviet bloc provided its own Conference on European Security, held in Warsaw from July 4-6, with representatives from 22 Eastern and Western European countries. In an "appeal to European public opinion," the conference repeated the current Soviet propaganda demands: a "summit meeting to be held unconditionally," the recognition of the two German States, military disengagement in Central Europe, Scandinavia and the Balkans. (Radio Warsaw, July 6.)

Activity on the Baltic

"Maritime Days" were celebrated in the Baltic port of Szczecin in the Western Territories through the week ending Sunday, June 28, with Party chief Wladyslaw Gomułka in attendance. Defense Minister Marian Spychalski, who was the main speaker at the final-day ceremonies, took the occasion to refer to the Western Territories and

the Oder-Neisse line as "our ancient lands on the Baltic Sea," and "Poland's historic frontier." Spychalski also gave his backing to a plan for a denuclearized zone from Scandinavia to the Adriatic, thus to turn the Baltic Sea into a "sea of peace." (*Trybuna Ludu* [Warsaw], June 29.)

In honor of "Baltic Sea Week," which began June 27, a conference was held in Rostock, East Germany, with representatives from the Scandinavian countries, Poland and the USSR. Once again the "sea of peace" refrain was sounded, the Bonn government attacked, and the Oder-Neisse boundary defended. (Radio Berlin [Soviet Zone], June 30.)

POLAND

Second Plenum Sets Agricultural Policy

The Second Plenum of the Party Central Committee—first since the Congress last March—was held June 22-23 for the purpose of announcing the new program for agriculture (see pages 37-39). Simultaneously, the Supreme Committee of the United Peasant Party, ally of the Communists in the countryside, also met to give its approval to the striking agricultural reforms. The timing of the meetings was evidence of the importance the regime attaches to the program, which is an attempt to fill an embarrassing gap in the political and economic structure of Polish Communism. The program had been under preparation since

"Revisionism" in Agriculture

THE BELGRADE paper *Ekonomika Politika*, June 6, discussed a current phase of the Soviet-bloc anti-Yugoslav campaign, in which various failures are imputed to the Yugoslav economy and these laid at the door of Tito's "revisionism." This phase, the paper said, was inaugurated by two Soviet economists, V. Zhamin and B. Miroshnichenko. "Both Soviet scientists, one in the organ of Soviet Ministry of Agriculture and the other in the organ of the Soviet Central Planning Institution, take pains to establish a correlation between Yugoslav revisionism and the economic bankruptcy of Yugoslavia. . . ."

V. Zhamin wrote: "Life has shown that revisionist theories and their practical realization resulted in a significant decline in the level of Yugoslav agricultural production in recent years." This argument was supported by Dr. Miroshnichenko, who added that Yugoslav agricultural production has not reached its prewar level.

Ekonomika Politika answered these criticisms by stating that "life, i.e. the actuality, is neither what *Pravda's* economists . . . desire to show nor what the above-mentioned Soviet scientists assumed as factual. Life shows the opposite of what Zhamin and Miroshnichenko state."

It then cited data on agriculture in Yugoslavia. Yugoslav agriculture stagnated on her prewar level until 1954, due to limited Yugoslav possibilities for investing more in agri-

culture. "And it is not necessary," continued the paper, "for us to explain to Soviet scientists why Yugoslav potential was limited until 1954." Clearly, the paper was referring to the Soviet blockade as the basic cause. Production figures were quoted, demonstrating that in 1955 Yugoslav agricultural production was about 16 percent above the average production figures of the ten prewar years. In 1956 production was 3 percent less than average because of climatic conditions. 1957 saw a 40 percent increase—above the average—and in 1958, in spite of climatic conditions, production rose 21 percent above the ten-year prewar average.

"They," said *Ekonomika Politika*, "who look for a correlation between 'revisionism' and agricultural yields should follow through. In this instance both Soviet scientists must conclude, to their consternation, that with the strengthening of the 'revisionist' policy in Yugoslavia also has come an increased volume in total agricultural production. . . ."

The paper continued: "On the basis of entirely wrong information, of shoddy, slanted publicity, which serves a certain propaganda purpose, they attempt to create a science which should produce textbooks, encyclopedias and other scientific and political documents of lasting value. . . . It is true and known to us that from the beginning of 1948 there were also drawn 'scientific generalizations' and 'lasting conclusions' which were later denied; they were proclaimed forgeries by the most official [sources]."

Current Developments—Poland

Т. ПИНДАРЕВ



A cartoon from the Bulgarian Party newspaper *Rabotnichesko Delo* (Sofia), July 2, alluding to the cold war in the Mediterranean. NATO fisherman, seated on the heel of Italy with a basket labelled "Mediterranean Pact" beside him, complains: "Fishing is bad this season."

the Party Congress in March, when the aim of expanding the agricultural circles into a "mass, universal, social-economic organization" was first announced.

Although the joint resolution of the two parties (*Trybuna Ludu* [Warsaw], June 26) stated that agricultural circles "are by no means competing with the collective farm movement" and should, on the contrary, "be regarded as a school for developing the awareness and practical habits [of the peasantry] for collective farming," the program is in certain respects a radical departure from traditional Communist policies in agriculture. The Soviet press apparently refrained from comment, but *Pravda* carried Polish News Agency extracts from Gomulka's speech which summarized it in a factual and objective manner.

Hungary Censures Polish Agriculture

An outspoken criticism of Polish agriculture appeared in the Hungarian economic weekly, *Figyelő* (Budapest), June 30: "In Poland, the most backward sector in the building of Socialism is agriculture. . . . At present, the individual producers supply three-quarters of the agricultural production. Although the State sector, which is cultivating 2.5 million hectares (12.5 percent of the arable land), and the farming of the remaining collectives, which

occupy one-tenth of this area, are expanding year after year . . . the growth of the Socialist sector is very slow. . . . The situation of People's Poland has many peculiarities. We might phrase it this way: there is no other Socialist country where the contradictions between the remnants of the capitalistic past and the rapidly growing Socialist elements are as numerous and marked as in Poland."

Poland, of course, is the one country of the bloc to eschew forced collectivization, and Hungary is this year in the throes of a major collectivization drive.

Khrushchev in Poland

On July 14, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev arrived in Warsaw for a ten-day visit to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the "liberation of Poland." He was greeted at the airport by Polish Party leader Wladyslaw Gomulka, whom Khrushchev called his "good friend." (*New York Times*, July 15.) On his last official visit to Warsaw, in October 1956, Khrushchev intervened against Gomulka's leadership and threatened Warsaw with Soviet tanks; now, the theme of Soviet-Polish friendship was sweetly sounded.

The second day of his trip found the Soviet Premier in the coal-mining region near Katowice. During one of his ebullient speeches there, Khrushchev told the miners that "your priests promise you paradise in heaven; we'll offer you paradise on earth." Happiness, Premier Khrushchev pointed out, came through work, not prayers. (*New York Times*, July 16.) According to Western reports the Soviet leader's first reception, while not hostile, was restrained, with good-sized but quiet crowds in attendance.

Minister Replaced

Stefan Zolkiewski, Minister of Higher Education, was relieved from this post "in order to devote more time to his work in the Party Central Committee and to his journalistic activities." (*Radio Warsaw*, June 18.) Zolkiewski, generally considered to be a faithful Communist but one closer to the "liberal" group rather than the Stalinist faction, became Minister of Higher Education in 1956; following the "October revolution" he became editor of the Gomulka weekly, *Polityka*; later he became editor of *Nowa Kultura*. During the Twelfth Plenum of the Party

Forced Physical Work

THE DAILY organ of the Socialist Youth Union, *Sztandar Młodych* (Warsaw), May 26, strongly criticized a projected decree requiring one year's manual labor as a condition for admission to certain university courses:

"The very words, 'Youth of Worker and Peasant Origin, to Your Studies,' raises objections. A year of forced physical work, first of all, deprive students of contact with learning . . . ; they can easily forget what they learned in secondary school. . . . A year of physical work for girls, candidates for building or architecture, seems to be a great misunderstanding."

Central Committee (October 1958), he was accused of going too slow in establishing chairs of Marxist studies in the universities, and the June issue of the Warsaw monthly, *Nowe Drogi*, published an article criticizing his Ministry.

New Minister of Higher Education is Henryk Golanski, who, during the German occupation, was a member of the Home Army loyal to the London government-in-exile. In 1949 he entered the regime's service with the post of Deputy Minister of Light Industry, and has been Deputy Minister of Higher Education since 1951.

Riot Near Lublin

On June 26, a crowd numbering approximately 1,000 people protested against the decision of the regime preventing the construction of a church in the industrial town of Krasnik Fabryczny near Lublin, according to Western sources. The local authorities claimed that "hooligans" joined the mob which then attacked the town hall and police headquarters; local police called in reinforcements from Lublin to put down the demonstration with tear gas and clubs. Those injured were estimated at between 25 to 50, and 20 persons were arrested.

The Lublin daily, *Sztandar Ludu*, June 29, confirmed the Western reports in the essential details; however, the journal took pains to point out that very few workers took part in the demonstration and that on the following day workers' organizations and individual peasants condemned the riot.

Party Review No Longer Published

Reputedly less popular than other literary periodicals, *Trybuna Literacka*, the Sunday book supplement of the Party organ *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), ceased publication on June 28. The weekly first appeared in the fall of 1957; its apparent goals were to combat "revisionism" and to popularize the Party's cultural policies. According to the farewell editorial, there was no longer any need for the journal, since most of the Party's cultural aims had been accomplished:

"During a relatively long period of time and with considerable persistence, we have managed to stamp out no small number of myths and prejudices. Many things, fought for by our publication, have now been transformed into widely-accepted reality; many of our attitudes and evaluations have permeated journalistic awareness. This was a slow but constant process."

Cardinal Attacked

A sermon delivered in Warsaw by Cardinal Wyszyński on Corpus Christi Day, May 28, was severely criticized by the regime press. Speaking before a congregation estimated at 150,000, the Primate protested a ruling which prohibited the use of loudspeakers carrying sermons outside the confines of the church: "We may demand that our rights be respected. Regulations forbidding the use of mechanical means to help spread the word of God will not stop it from reaching you." The Cardinal also stated that municipal authorities had recently removed a religious statue allegedly obstructing the construction of a new street: "We cannot

remain silent when the objects of our religious faith are being publicly desecrated."

At the time of the sermon the Polish press was silent. It was not until two weeks later, when Western reports of the sermon appeared, that the regime answered the Cardinal's complaints and printed the excerpts quoted above. An article entitled "Cui bono?" in *Zycie Warszawy* (Warsaw) June 14, commented on the sermon as follows:

"We would not return to the . . . political statements made by the Cardinal if it were not for the numerous repercussions they have caused abroad. . . . Foreign correspondents in Poland eagerly pounce on [his] thunderous words to proclaim that there is religious persecution in Poland. . . . It is, therefore, necessary that we unmask these . . . lies." The newspaper then went on to describe its own version of the removal of the religious statue, asserting that this was done only when Church authorities refused to cooperate with the city administration.

Further Attacks on Church

Recent anti-Church propaganda included an article in the publication of the Society of Free-Thinkers and Atheists, *Argumenty* (Warsaw), June 7, accusing the clergy of

(Continued on page 40)



"Fire?"

"No, a meeting. In a minute the man making the criticism is going to jump."

Szpilki (Warsaw), June 28, 1959

A New Road for Poland's Farmers?

POLISH COMMUNISTS are readying themselves for another try at the agrarian problem, and their new program differs strikingly from the time-honored policies followed elsewhere in the Soviet bloc. The program was given to the Central Committee on June 22 by Party leader Gomulka, in a speech that underlined the failure of Communist farm policy in the past. (*Trybuna Ludu* [Warsaw], June 23.) Gone were the old clichés about collective farming, class warfare in the village and the superiority of the Soviet Union; instead, he cited the postwar achievements of farmers in Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, France, West Germany, Austria and Italy. In place of the "Socialist transformation of agriculture"—with its battery of economic and political pressures to push the peasantry into collective farms—he proposed raising the technical level of Polish private farming first and attempting to collectivize it later. The plan calls for a seven-year program of mechanization, land improvement and farm construction, to be financed by government rebates and administered through groups called "agricultural circles."

The aim of modernizing agriculture is being emphasized throughout the Soviet bloc, where years of doctrinaire Marxism have done little to raise the technological level of peasant farming. But in every country except Poland the objective is being pursued through the Soviet-style mechanism of collective farming, and where this is not yet complete—as in Hungary, for example—the drive to collectivize takes precedence over measures to improve agriculture. In Poland, where since 1956 forced collectivization has been abandoned and Communist efforts to establish collective farms have failed to make headway against the bitter resistance of the peasantry, Gomulka has decided to gamble on agricultural development linked to a milder form of "cooperation." The agricultural circles, voluntary groups formed for the joint purchase of machinery and tools and for mutual help, date back to prewar Poland and have enjoyed a rebirth since the Communists abandoned their collective farm program in October 1956. The circles now exist in 40 percent of the villages and include about 15 percent of the farms. The regime will sponsor and push the further development of these circles, and make available to them funds for the purchase of the necessary machinery.

The program reflects the need for a political platform in the countryside, plus a fear that the agricultural goals of the seven-year economic Plan may not be achieved. The Plan was adopted last March at the Third Party Congress, and called for a 30 percent increase in total agricultural production by 1965. The new measures, involving an enormous outlay for capital equipment, amount to a revision of the plan. Deliveries of tractors to farms during 1959-1965 are to total 112,000 instead of the 80,000 originally planned, and the supply of other machinery is to be more than double. Expenditures on land drainage and other soil improvements will be increased 25 percent. These changes will necessitate a radical expansion in the farm machinery industry and the

building of new factories for the production of earth-moving equipment and drainage pipes, as well as the import of 19,000 tractors from Czechoslovakia and 500 tractors from the USSR. Outlays for repair facilities and for the training of drivers and mechanics will also be increased. The total additional burden to the economy, according to Gomulka, will be about 24 billion *zloty* in outlays for capital investment during the seven years. This in turn will necessitate revisions in the foreign trade plan and a search for "hidden reserves" in the domestic economy, if the program is to be carried through without threatening other goals already decided upon.

A Battle Lost

The proceedings of the Central Committee meeting were a tacit admission that Communism has come off second best in its long struggle with the Polish peasant. Fifteen years of Marxism have done almost nothing to alter the structure of Polish agriculture, in which nearly two-thirds of the farms are smaller than five hectares (about 12 acres) and the horse is the chief form of traction. Grain yields per hectare are at about the prewar level, and yields of sugar beets and potatoes are lower—facts which even Gomulka refused to present in all their dismal accuracy. He admitted, however, that while agriculture has stagnated in Poland it has progressed rapidly in Western Europe, and sketched one aspect of this development in a passage remarkable from the mouth of a dedicated Communist:

"In the postwar period a major increase in the mechanization of agriculture took place in almost all European countries. During this period of 12 to 13 years, the number of tractors per 100 arable hectares increased about 6 times in Czechoslovakia and Sweden, 5 times in Italy, 15 times in France, over 20 times in Austria, and about 24 times in Belgium. In 1958 the number of tractors in France increased by 100,000 or 20 percent compared with 1957. In Italy in 1957 the number of grain combines increased four times over the level of 1956, and in Belgium and France 40 percent.

"In the light of this data, we can see clearly the backwardness of our agriculture with respect to mechanical traction. Polish agriculture is also lagging behind other countries in regard to other machines of fundamental importance in the mechanization of field work."

Even more serious, the laggard state of Polish farming makes it difficult to feed the rapidly growing population without resorting to imports of grain from the Soviet Union and from the West. Gomulka told the Central Committee that during the years 1950-1955 Poland imported 3,993,000 tons of grain at a cost of 303.5 million dollars, and that in 1956-1958 the quantity rose to 4,170,000 tons at a cost of 274.6 million dollars. He added that in 1961-1965 it would be necessary to import at least 6,550,000 tons of grain if the consumption targets of the economic plan were to be fulfilled.

The food problem is at bottom a political problem, and

consists in the fact that the Polish peasant eats far more than did the Russian *muzhik* during the years when Stalin was collectivizing Soviet agriculture. He eats more because the Polish Communists have been forced to raise living standards as the price of obtaining even the passive cooperation of the people, and also because he is a small farmer who produces for himself first and for the market second. According to Gomulka, per capita consumption of meat and animal fats in 1958 was 145 percent higher than in the prewar years, sugar 200 percent higher, milk and milk products 35 percent higher; and most of these increases occurred in the rural areas. While Soviet industrialization was financed at the expense of the peasants, herded into collectives, the Polish Communists are being compelled to deal more equitably with the countryside.

If the peasants are to be tolerated, however, the same does not apply to Poland's three million horses, which ate up more grain in 1958 than all of the country's urban population. Gomulka estimated in his speech that the mechanization program will replace 300,000 horses by 1965 and free enough land to feed about 225,000 head of cattle and 320,000 pigs. This development, plus the other gains of a more intensified agriculture, is supposed to enable Poland to step up its traditional exports of meat products and livestock sufficiently to balance the expected imports of grain.

Organizing the Peasant

TO TRANSLATE all this arithmetic into reality, Gomulka's advisers have produced one of the most original ideas in the recent history of Communism. The agricultural circles, rooted in the social life of the peasantry, are, it is hoped, an institution acceptable to the countryside as collective farms are not. The Party proposes to expand them into "a mass organization embracing the overwhelming majority of the peasantry"—subject, of course, to control by the Party and local government bodies. The State will turn over to the circles most of its revenue from agriculture—i.e., the difference between what it pays for compulsory deliveries of farm produce and the prices prevailing in the free market. The circles will use these funds for "strictly defined purposes of investment serving the development of agriculture, and primarily for the purchase of larger agricultural machines to be used collectively by both the members of agricultural circles and by peasants who do not belong to them." The members of the circles will be required to contribute to a common fund, and the circles themselves will be expected to operate at a profit, with the ultimate object of becoming self-supporting.

To insure that the circles adhere to the objectives laid down for them and make proper use of their resources, they are to be surrounded and supervised by the organs of local government. The community people's councils "will determine the order of utilization of the agricultural development fund resources and the resources accrued from other investment outlays and from State credits. They will also supervise and control the correct use of these resources, give expert assistance through correctly deploying agronomists, zootechnicians and other specialists, and work out complex plans for the development of agriculture in their areas. . . .



"You say I'm a pig, but from what point of view are you speaking?"

Polityka (Warsaw), June 20, 1959

To facilitate the community people's councils in carrying out a coordinating and supervisory role in their relations with agricultural circles, it is necessary to set up committees consisting of all chairmen of agricultural circles within the community, the regional agronomist, and perhaps a representative of the district people's council."

For the Communists and their rural ally, the United Peasant Party, the program promises to fill an embarrassing vacuum. Since the fall of 1956, when the framework of collective farming collapsed, Party agitators in the countryside have had little to do and the rural apparatus has been practically nonexistent. Now they have a mission:

"The work of expanding agricultural circles, directing their activities in organizing a joint effort by the peasantry to raise agricultural production to a higher level—this is the main task facing Communist and Peasant Party members in the rural areas today and for a long time to come. . . . It is necessary that under the general leadership of the [Communist] Party, every village, the widest masses of peasants and rural women and youth be reached by organized meetings, by questions and answers. It is necessary to explain that the new form of State assistance . . . will multiply the results of peasant work and make it higher and more productive. It will yield more agricultural products for sale and raise the living standards of the rural population. . . .

"Wherever there is a Party organization it should support the formation of an agricultural circle or the converting of existing circles into a mass organization. . . . The work of Party authorities and organizations, insuring the correct social substance and direction of the activities of agricultural circles, should go hand-in-hand with the struggle to impart a mass character to these circles. Both poor and rich peasants will be members of agricultural circles. Various, frequently controversial interests will clash in these circles. . . . Party organizations must organize the peasants for the battle against all injustice, the clique system, or favoritism. . . . Without undermining, but rather

by strengthening the self-management of the circles, Party organizations . . . should insure that lesser peasants, socially conscious and unswervingly solicitous for social property and its just administration, have a decisive voice on the boards of the circles. . . ."

"A Peasant of Western Culture"

This new Party line raises embarrassing questions for Communists who have in the past preached collective farming. On the one hand, Party agitators must assure the peasants that the new program is not simply collectivization in another guise; on the other, they cannot disavow collective farming as an ideal at a time when other Communist Parties are talking it more and more. Gomulka said to the Central Committee, "In this connection, the question may arise: which is the Party supporting in its agricultural policy, agricultural circles or collective farms?" His answer was that the circles are not competing with collective farms as an ideal; rather, "they should be regarded as a school shaping the consciousness and practical habits for collective farming. In particular, the introduction of the concept of mechanization of production processes in peasant farms will systematically draw peasants closer to complex teamwork and to the ideas of the collective farm movement."

"We do not intend to disguise it, though hostile propaganda endeavors to exploit the circumstance for its own purposes by telling the peasants, 'There you are, the Party wants to deceive you. It is talking about agricultural circles and thinking about collective farms.' It is not the Party that is deceiving the peasants. It is the reactionaries who are trying to deceive them.

"We are saying what we are thinking. The peasants will become convinced of what they can learn from the mechanization of farms, with the use of machines which constitute collective social property. We are only anticipating the result of that work. . . .

"The choice is not between agricultural circles and collective farms. Both demand the concentration of effort by the Party for their development. . . . The Socialist transformation of rural areas is dependent on the realization by peasants that it will result in better productivity, and that joint economy in agriculture is a superior system."

His words seemed to imply that, for the indefinite future, the Party will sponsor the circles along with collective farms but without actively pushing the latter. The task of the Party rank and file will be to convince the suspicious peasantry that this is so, and to persuade them that in accepting government funds and government tutelage they will not be putting their heads into a political trap. There is reason to believe that the peasants will require a lot of persuading. On July 7 a Radio Warsaw commentator took as his text the following letter from a disbelieving peasant: "You were unable to force the peasants into collective farms, so now you are trying other methods, you are starting to force them into agricultural circles. The Polish peasant desires freedom, and although he works 16 to 17 hours a day without vacation he has to deny himself and his children milk, butter and eggs in order to have enough money to pay all sorts of dues, taxes, etc. What

Missionaries Far Afield

ALTHOUGH BULGARIA was not represented at the International Trade Fair in New York City this year, it was one of 22 countries that exhibited at a fair in Portland, Oregon, held in celebration of the state's hundredth anniversary. The Bulgarian pavilion featured a fountain of rose water along with industrial and folk-art exhibits. On June 12 the Bulgarian representative at the United Nations, Dr. Petar Vutov, gave a lecture at the City Club in Portland entitled "Bulgaria—Past, Present and Future." On June 13 the Bulgarian trade delegation held a reception attended by the Governor of Oregon and the Mayor of Portland, at which—according to the Bulgarian press back home—Dr. Vutov was presented with the key to the city.

The Sofia newspaper *Zemledelsko Zname* featured a piece by a Portland journalist in its issue of June 14 describing the Bulgarian pavilion as the "most aromatic" at the fair. He wrote that the American public had been impressed most by the rose water fountain and by the Bulgarian sheepskin coats.

about your slogans? What about social justice? Signed: A Peasant of Western Culture."

The commentator replied to the letter in a way that will no doubt serve as a model for Party agitators in coming months:

"I interpret these words as meaning that Polish peasants want to farm, live and govern themselves independently, without compulsion and without administrative pressure. . . . I too interpret freedom in this way, as freedom from administrative pressure. But I also interpret freedom as liberty from superhuman labor in the countryside, freedom from fear that if one eats more butter or eggs, as our listener writes, then there won't be enough of them for sale and there won't be money for essential expenditures on the farm. . . .

"In Scandinavia they gather crops almost double those in Poland. Cows in Denmark give three times as much milk as the average peasant's cow in Poland. If, on the basis of such economic achievements on his own farm, our listener classifies himself as belonging to Western culture, all we can do is to congratulate him. But if, speaking of the West, he is thinking of freedom to accept or reject progress in agriculture, he is greatly mistaken. For example, in Great Britain, when a farmer misuses State credits and does not raise his crops in accordance with the advice of State agronomists, he is simply thrown off his farm. In Greece there exists a constitutional rule that, when the State thinks it advisable, it may forcibly amalgamate peasant farms. In America, when a farmer wants to break his government's directives on what to sow each year and in what quantities, he must say goodbye to his bank credits. . . .

"Therefore, it is worth making sure, if a listener classifies himself as a follower of Western culture, whether that culture—at least in the field of agriculture—is willing to accept him as a member."

(Continued from page 36)

beating children in schools; the organs of justice were also criticized for excessive leniency in meting out punishment for such crimes. The same edition of *Argumenty* came out in favor of birth control and against Church-organized "consulting clinics" for women: "Our government does much, but not enough, to expand birth control centers; but someone 'at the top' has also granted permission for parishes to open consulting centers for women. . . . Strange, parish consulting centers in a Socialist system!"

Coexistence Urged

Voices were still raised in defense of the arrangement, dating from Gomulka's 1956 ascendancy and unique in the area, whereby Church and State coexist in overwhelmingly Catholic Poland. One attempt to relieve tension between Catholics and Communists appeared in the Catholic weekly, *Tygodnik Powszechny* (Warsaw), June 21, in an article by Stanislaw Stomma, Chairman of "Znak," a club made up of Catholic deputies to the Sejm (Parliament). Stomma criticized "Catholic politicians" in the West who "would like to keep the conflict between the Church and State going at its highest pitch and are afraid of all . . . efforts to erase the line of division." In Poland,

The Closed Door

LAST YEAR about 60 percent of Warsaw University graduates received job offers. . . . This year there are only half that number of openings. Out of 1,400 young people who will finish their studies, only about 30 percent can expect jobs in their field.

"I am not concerned with figures or even with graduates who 'will take any job.' But let us not deny students the right to ask: 'What will I get out of five years of study? What will I get for a diploma? Let us not ignore the fact that the answers to these questions will influence student attitudes toward studying and their choice of studies. For instance, Andrzej K. has a diploma in Polish literature. He teaches in a primary school near Warsaw. But he teaches biology. And he is not alone. A graduate of Slavonic studies is working as a clerk in Cepelia, the State arts and crafts shop.

"Can these stories of graduates be treated merely as idle anecdotes? They are well known to thousands of students who will be graduating and also to those who have just begun their studies. . . .

"In olden days there were active scientific circles in the universities where youth could give vent to their ambitions, their need for activity and science. . . . The idea of scientific circles cannot now become flesh. There is a lack of willing members. They prefer to play bridge, stand in lines to find part-time jobs or passionately try to arrange vacations abroad."

(*Kierunki* [Warsaw], June 21, 1959.)

however, "the policy of sharpening internal conflicts is contrary to the national interest and, from the Catholic point of view, would prove in the long run to be nothing else but a policy of suicide. . . . The attempt to create an acceptable *modus vivendi* between people with different convictions within the framework of our social-political conditions is a specific Polish experiment. We attach great importance to it and shall struggle for its success."

Polish Library Case Ruling

The Paris Court of Appeals declared on July 8 that the 121-year old Polish Library in Paris would remain under its present (exile) management, according to *Le Monde* (Paris), July 9. Recently, the Warsaw government had demanded that the library be turned over to the Polish State (see *East Europe*, July, p. 44.); however, the French court decided that the present lease, concluded after World War II with the Polish Roman Catholic Union of Chicago, was valid until 1963. A court-appointed administrator will continue to supervise management of the library as long as the question of ultimate ownership remains inconclusive.

Tenth Anniversary of Nowa Huta

High Party and government dignitaries, led by Premier Josef Cyrankiewicz and Defense Minister Marian Spychalski, participated in the anniversary celebrations of Nowa Huta. This "Socialist city," near Cracow, constructed after the war largely by "voluntary" youth labor brigades, is now one of the largest industrial centers in Poland. Referring to the Lenin steel foundry which was the nucleus around which the city was built, Premier Cyrankiewicz reminded his listeners that the potential production from this mill was expected to reach 3.3 million tons annually, "more than the prewar production of all steel mills in Poland—and in a single industrial center which did not even exist ten years ago." (*Trybuna Ludu* [Warsaw], June 21.)

Bulgarians in Poland

On June 25, an official delegation from Bulgaria, including Party chief Todor Zhivkov and Premier Anton Yugov, arrived in Warsaw for a five-day visit. From the flood of consequent speeches nothing of particular note emerged; the eternal friendship of the two countries was pledged and the leadership of the Soviet Union (and Communist China) was toasted. There were apparently no strong attacks on Yugoslavia, although Yugov at one point asserted that "our Parties will never reconcile themselves with the enemies of Socialism, with the contemporary revisionists who are attempting to destroy the unity of the Socialist camp and to weaken and disturb our friendship with the USSR." (Radio Sofia, June 30.)

At a Warsaw rally in honor of the visitors, Polish Party leader Gomulka, referring to the economic development in the two countries, was careful to make a distinction between their respective policies: "The 41 years of experience of the USSR and the experience of the other Socialist countries show that the economic plans of individual Soci-

King Ubu Rides Again

ONE OF THE features of the recent Juvenalia, the annual Polish students' festival in Cracow, was a performance of a revised version of the satirical play "King Ubu." This work by the French writer Alfred Jarry (1873-1907) was (in the words of the *Petit Larousse*) "a comedy-caricature, an enormous satire on the bourgeoisie"; now, it seems, two Polish students have rewritten it as a satire on current Polish events. Jan Kott, a well-known Polish writer who left the Party in 1957, commented favorably on the performance in *Przegląd Kulturalny* (Warsaw), May 21:

"A sensation at the Cracow festival was created by the play 'King Ubu,' staged by the Warsaw students' theater 'Stodola.' It corresponds completely with the tone of the festival. It was a play about the Millennium of those born in 1939. Those boys and girls for whom the Millennium is made up of two parts—999 years of history and last year. 'King Ubu' was [originally] written by a 15-year-old Alfred Jarry as a bloodthirsty satire on his history teacher. It is widely known that the 'action takes place in Poland, that is, nowhere.' 'King Ubu' has been adapted and has become a savage satire on the entire national history, from the Conversion of Poland to October [1956]. It spares no complex, no national sacred tradition; it ridicules everything. Sometimes shivers run up the spine from that laughter. . . . But I am not scandalized and I am not horrified. It must be so. Like Master Pantagruel, I believe in the virtues of laxatives.

"I saw 'King Ubu' as a true liberation. I would take school excursions to see it. I will not have to take them. They will go by themselves. For the first time in Poland, it seems, we are beginning to have unbelieving youth."

The Party's main daily attacked Kott's enthusiastic report (*Trybuna Ludu* [Warsaw], May 24):

"Young people allegedly believing nothing, rejecting everything, every ideology—Catholic . . . or Marxist—this is the picture which Kott brought from his extensive studies during the festival. 'Happy' youth, avoiding matters connected with the 'saving of Poland and of the



world,' apolitical and distant from basic dilemmas of the present, united only 'in a certain kind of rationalist irony'!

"Kott is certainly wrong—when he praises this attitude and when he proclaims, on the basis of his shallow observation of a few days of student carnival in Cracow, that young people are really like that. Facts speak differently; they say that young people, in their own way, are engaged in national and world matters, that they make difficult choices, that they take life seriously. But the pattern publicized by Kott is a pattern for an idle and jeering onlooker who leaves to others the burden of the fight for the solution of many dramatic and difficult dilemmas with which the present abounds. Does Kott really believe cheap skepticism is an ideal which the young generation should follow?"

The photo above, showing one of the "King Ubu" players, is from the Warsaw weekly *Stolica*, June 14, 1959.

alist countries are based on practical foundations. Under the conditions existing in Poland a leap forward in the development of agriculture and industry such as is planned by our Bulgarian comrades would be impossible." (Radio Warsaw, June 29.)

Trade Accord Signed

At the conclusion of the visit a trade agreement was signed between the two countries extending the mutual exchange for the current year. From Bulgaria, Poland will receive zinc and lead concentrates, apricots, fresh tomatoes, meat preserves and other industrial and consumer goods. Poland will deliver to Bulgaria complete installations for the production of bottles, rolled goods, sewing machines, chemicals, textile fabrics, ready-made clothes, beer and other goods. (Radio Warsaw, June 30.)

HUNGARY

Bela Kovacs Dies

On June 21, Bela Kovacs, former Secretary-General of the Independent Smallholders' Party (see box), died in a hospital in Pecs at the age of 53. (*Nepszabadsag* [Budapest], June 23.) His widow received condolences from Party First Secretary Janos Kadar and President Istvan Dobi, and his death was officially treated as a great loss to the nation. Kovacs, who had been a member of the Nagy Revolt government in October 1956, retired in ill health to his native home in Mecsekajla after the uprising had been crushed.

The news that he had been elected to parliament in

the December 1958 "elections" was greeted in the West with some astonishment; in February 1959 an article appeared in the Hungarian press, signed by Kovacs, supporting Kadar's collectivization drive (see *East Europe*, April, p. 49). Then, just a week prior to Bela Kovacs' death, *Nepszabadsag*, June 14, published an interview with him, in which he allegedly refuted Western reports that he had been "unwilling to participate personally in the support of Kadar's policies." Also according to this article, Kovacs had changed his attitude towards collectivization since 1945: "Today our people are engaged in building Socialism, and I see no possibility for any social stratum, even for the peasantry, to continue to march along the path of capitalism, of which I have never approved."

Less than two weeks after Kovacs' death, an article appeared in the Budapest daily, *Magyar Nemzet*, July 3, by a self-styled friend of Kovacs, Laszlo Kocsis. According to him, Kovacs had been a convinced "Socialist" after his release from a Soviet prison. Kovacs' role in the Revolt was cast in the light of someone who had always supported "Soviet-Hungarian friendship" and the leadership of Janos Kadar.

ILO Rejects Regime Delegates

At the annual conference of the International Labor Organization (a specialized agency of the UN) in Geneva, June 22, the Hungarian delegation was denied seats. Western delegates initiated this action on the ground that the Kadarist group was blatantly unrepresentative of the Hungarian people, and they were overwhelmingly supported by the other representatives. After the vote, the Soviet bloc walked out. Radio Budapest, June 23, in reporting this news, complained that the objections raised against Hungary were "political propaganda . . . serving the aims of the cold war."

Diplomats' Travel Curbed

In a note delivered to the American Legation in Budapest, the Hungarian government accused the United States of subversive activities within Hungary: "American agents still are parachuted over Hungary, and one of the United States' attaches went even so far as to take along, on one of his intelligence trips, another military attache of a NATO country." In order to "safeguard the State," American personnel in Hungary are to be restricted to a radius of 25 miles from the capital. (Radio Budapest, July 6.) The US State Department retaliated by restricting the movement of Hungarian diplomats to 25 miles from the centers of New York City and Washington. (*New York Times*, July 8.)

Amnesty Denied

Hungarian Party Chief Janos Kadar announced before a meeting of the National Council of the Communist-backed Patriotic People's Front, held in Budapest June 19-20, that no further amnesty for political prisoners would be forthcoming so long as outside pressures were exerted

on their behalf: "We have said officially many times that nobody would be amnestied so long as hostile circles or circles from abroad tried to bring pressure to bear upon us in this direction; that if they wanted no amnesty in Hungary, they should try to exercise pressure. When this pressure ceases and we think the time appropriate, we will proclaim an amnesty." (*Nepszabadsag* [Budapest], June 21.)

Payment in Lieu of Military Service

Starting next year, Hungarians of draft age who "for any reason" are not called to the colors will be required to make a monetary contribution instead. The tax will be eight percent of the basic wage for workers and members of collective farms. Others, including independent peasants, tradesmen and artisans, will be required to pay more. The measure is apparently intended to apply to that considerable body of Hungarian youth who are not considered politically reliable for military service. (Radio Budapest, July 4.)

Bela Kovacs

BELA KOVACS, son of Hungarian peasants, was born in 1908 in southwestern Hungary. While in his twenties he joined the Smallholders' Party, as a leader of which he stood courageously against the Nazis during the war. In 1944 he became Undersecretary of the Interior in the provisional government of the city of Debrecen. As Secretary-General of the Smallholders' Party, he led the forces of democracy to victory in the 1945 elections. Despite Soviet threats and maneuvers, his party obtained a majority of 56 percent of the votes, the Communists polling only 17 percent.

Minister of Agriculture from November 1945 to March 1946, Bela Kovacs fought courageously against Soviet-backed Communist attempts to take over the regime. Attacked by the Communists as a "conspirator," he was arrested in February 1947 by Soviet authorities on the grounds of espionage against the Soviet Union. He was deported and spent four years in the USSR.

Released in 1954 under the New Course of Imre Nagy, he came back a sick and broken man. During the 1956 Hungarian Revolt, Imre Nagy asked him to join his cabinet as Minister of Agriculture. A few days later, he became Minister of State without portfolio, but due to his bad health, he took a relatively small part in the events of the uprising. After the defeat of the Revolt, he returned to his village home, seriously ill, and despite Communist attempts, refused to return to politics. He was, however, elected to parliament on the single slate of candidates in December 1958, but never entered the parliament building, spending the last part of his life under constant clinical treatment.



The Kadar regime is attempting to staff its new collective farms with directors from the "intelligentsia." Shown above are the president (right) and bookkeeper of the "Socialism Will Win" collective in the village of Szentmihaly, both of whom are retired school headmasters.

Orszag Vilag (Budapest), June 3, 1959

Second Thoughts Among the Peasants

There have been recent complaints on the behavior of many of the peasants who were swept into kolkhozes in the collectivization wave earlier this year. An article in the provincial paper *Hajdu-Bihari Naplo*, May 10, said that the peasants of Gyulahaza "carried on as if no collective farms had been set up":

"In the quiet days which followed the organization of collective farms, rumors began to spread like wildfire; people were told that it was wrong to form collectives so quickly, since now the whole idea of collectivization had been given up. 'For three years we shall be left in peace and nobody will bother us.' Not to speak of the fact that news concerning disarmament and peaceful coexistence was interpreted as meaning that 'collectivization has been given up for good in Hungary.' One farmer went so far as to say that he had read this in a newspaper himself."

Another article in the same paper on May 24 stated that in the village of Egyek, where the peasants had "signed hundreds of [collectivization] entrance forms," many of them later decided to withdraw. "They say that they only signed the entrance forms because, and on condition that, all farmers of the village would do the same. That of course is not the true reason. Among the new members there are some who are fierce enemies of our regime and, therefore, also of the collective farm movement."

The weekly farm newspaper *Szabad Fold* (Budapest) carried an article on June 21 stating that in the county of Szolnok there were "a few villages" where the peasants had done no more than to sign the necessary papers. "The peasants do not keep their word, thereby damaging their honor and rendering the start of their collectives and the foundation of large-scale farming more difficult. Some peasants have taken their wheat fields into the collectives but want to harvest on them individually. . . . Peasants should not listen to hostile news and to prophesying, superstitious old women."

Program for Intellectuals

After the leading role played by the Petofi Circle in the events preceding the 1956 Revolt, the spectre of intellectuals' clubs critical of Communism apparently still haunts the regime. Discussing the current clubs and professional organizations, Radio Budapest, June 29, asserted that "remnants of the spirit of the old feudal gentry" could still be found among them. Although still important, their primary task is "to create an atmosphere which not only breaks away from a feudal mentality, but produces its most effective antidote—the Socialist relationship of man to man."

A Look at Your Pants

THE WEARING of "ranch" pants or trousers "à la Texas" by young people has upset the Czechoslovak regime. Disapproval of such apparel—presumably the equivalent of American dungarees—was voiced in two recent articles:

"I was present at a disciplinary proceeding initiated by the Youth Federation against some students of a technical school. During last year's vacation these boys invented a new fad called 'Less Work.' They competed with such enthusiasm that the construction of a cowshed, on which they were engaged at the time, would have taken several decades. During the discussion one of the officials said: 'A look at your pants tells what you are!'

"There was a bit of truth in this. The boys had 'ranch' pants, close fitting, with zippers all over—in short, the last word. They excused themselves by saying they had bought them in a cooperative shop—in other words, in the Socialist sector—but it did not help."

(*Mlada Fronta* [Prague], May 24, 1959.)

"We were informed today by the director of the Prague 'Fashion Enterprise'—to which the 'Pionyr-Shop' in Zelezna Street, which has been subject to criticism on several occasions, belongs—that he has instructed all his enterprises to disregard the lack of taste on the part of some customers. As in the case of trousers 'à la Texas,' for instance."

(*Vecerni Praha* [Prague], May 28, 1959.)

Class Discrimination

Discrimination according to origin is still necessary for admission into universities and secondary schools, according to an article by Communist theoretician Dezso Nemes in *Nepszabadsag* (Budapest), June 14. Preferential treatment for those of "worker or peasant" background will continue until a 50 percent balance is attained between the children of these classes and children of engineers, agricultural experts, economists, etc. Such discrimination, however, "is a transitional manifestation of our society. It is important today, but will not be tomorrow."

More Decentralization

Many vestiges of Stalinist centralization have disappeared under Kadar; the latest move in this direction came when the executive committee of the Budapest City Council announced that medical dispensaries, hospitals, nurseries and secondary schools will be placed under the supervision of local councils rather than the central council, as previously. In the future, principals of schools will also be selected by these local councils. (*Nepszabadsag* [Budapest], June 18.)

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

New Agricultural Price System

In a resolution of June 6, the Party Central Committee announced a complex series of changes in agricultural prices that parallels similar shifts elsewhere in the Soviet bloc. (*Zemedselske Noviny* [Prague], June 20.) Compulsory deliveries, with their system of dual prices for below-quota and above-quota deliveries, will be replaced by a single system of prices for all produce sold to the State. These new prices will average 15 percent higher than those paid to farmers in 1958, but the difference will be offset by reductions in State subsidies to collective farms and by increases in agricultural taxes. The prices of agricultural machinery sold to collectives will be cut by 15-30 percent, and electricity prices by 25 percent. While the net effect, according to the decree, will be to increase the incomes of collective farms, the farms will be expected to devote the increase to capital investment rather than to raising the personal consumption of their members.

Emphasis on Increasing Production

The resolution criticized the present farm price system—standard throughout the Soviet bloc until 1956—as not conducive to economical production. The higher prices paid for above-quota deliveries, it said, encouraged greater output without regard to cost and thus "became a serious obstacle to reducing prime costs, discovering internal economies and raising [output per hectare]. . . . Therefore we must implement the principle that higher receipts and better pay must depend primarily on the expansion of production and an increase in labor productivity, and not upon

increasing receipts from deliveries at high purchase prices." Other reasons given for the change: the old price system encouraged farmers to conceal the amount of their arable land in order to reduce their delivery quotas; prices were not equitable between farms; the members of collective farms were encouraged to expand their private household plots at the expense of collective production; farmers' incomes tended to rise faster than production; the administration of agriculture was tending to become a bureaucratic rather than an economic enterprise. The criticisms parallel those advanced by Soviet Premier Khrushchev when he advocated similar reforms in the Soviet Union in June 1958.

The resolution also showed the concern of the Czechoslovak regime at the stagnation of agricultural production during the past several years. The Second Five Year Plan (1956-60) calls for an increase in gross farm output of 27

The Gottwaldov Swine

THE REMARKABLE NAIVETE and lack of sophistication in Communist anti-religious propaganda is well exemplified by the following remarks that appeared in *Osvetova Prace* (Prague), journal of Czechoslovak "enlightenment workers"—i.e., agit-prop functionaries—May 6, 1959:

"Even today unreasonable pagan customs still mingle with equally illogical church traditions. There are no supernatural forces and they cannot have a bearing on natural phenomena, because these cannot be influenced by magic.

"The reader now thinks: you are trying to convince me of what is already clear to everybody. Wrong! The nature-study research in the present-day village would surprise you. And so a suggestion is made to enlightenment workers: would it not be a good thing to make use of a collection of local voodooos for an informal discussion on superstition?

"In one village in the Gottwaldov region, for instance, women refused to feed pigs on Sundays because some saint had cursed a host of devils into them at some time; and it would be a sin to care for devils on the Lord's Day. At a certain kolkhoz in the vicinity of Prague, they strew wheat in the form of a cross in a corner of the field before starting to sow. True, only old crones do this, but let us bear in mind the high average age of workers in agriculture when considering the pertinacity of superstitions today. Superstitions induce fear in people, induce them to fold their hands and wait for help from the great unknown. It is no longer necessary to pray for a good harvest; people should work to obtain it.

"Another remark: it is easy to lead informal discussion evenings on local superstitions in the direction of criticism of religious remnants, for if people are not to believe in pagan superstitions, why should they believe in Christian ones which are no less absurd?"

Current Developments—Czechoslovakia



Not hula-hoop fans but young Czechoslovak girls practicing mass gymnastics for the district Spartacus games. The winners will go to the national Spartakiad in Prague in 1960.

Cover photo from *Svet v Obrazech* (Prague), June 20, 1959

percent by 1960, but in the period 1955-1958 it rose by only 5 or 6 percent. One aim of the changes is to apply a system of payment-by-result to the activities of the farm population, corresponding to the tightening of norms currently taking place in industry. "Just as the reorganization of the workers' wage system in industry is designed to achieve harmony between wage increases and labor productivity"—said the resolution—"so the new procurement system will insure harmony between increases in the incomes of collective farmers and expansion of the volume of their marketable output." The resolution stated that some farms will lose by the changes, but insisted that average spendable income will remain the same.

Limiting the Private Plot

In order to curb the persistent tendency of collective farmers to cultivate their own gardens more intensively than the common land, the resolution provides that delivery contracts signed by collective farms will be based on their total acreage, including the private plots. "The collective farms themselves will decide which of their members will participate with the output of their private plots in fulfilling the delivery contracts signed by the collective, and how this will be done."

The resolution also abolishes free sale of grain for fodder, in an effort to stop the practice cultivated by some farms of buying fodder and using it to fatten pigs for the market in excess of amounts stipulated in the plan. Fodder prices will be raised, and farms will be expected to grow

their own fodder or to purchase it from the State under specified conditions.

The changes in prices and taxes also apply to the shrinking number of independent farms, which now cultivate about 20 percent of the country's agricultural land. However, the resolution states that collective farms will continue to receive special assistance from the State when they are unprofitable, and the old discriminatory measures against private farming will obviously be continued.

The changes were made law by the National Assembly on July 9.

Literary Reviews Suspended

In a dramatic example of the neo-Stalinism of Czechoslovak cultural life, two literary magazines, *Nový Život* (the organ of the Writers' Union) and *Kveten* (the outlet of young writers) have been suspended. According to a notice which appeared in the June *Nový Život*, the two reviews were being dropped due to a decision taken by the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union following the Union's March conference which "underlined the errors and confusion connected with the period following the Second Congress of Czechoslovak Writers [in 1956]." A new literary periodical, *Plamen*, "which will connect literature much more closely with present-day life and which will [give] a more crystallized ideological line," is to appear in September.

Cultural Congress Convened

The Congress of Socialist Culture, held in Prague, June 8-11, was further confirmation that the period of "thaw" following the Second Writers' Congress in April 1956 had definitely come to an end. The main speaker was Ladislav Stoll, Rector of the Institute of Social Sciences and a member of the Party Central Committee, who, at least by implication, condemned those writers who continued to act in the spirit of the Second Congress: "There are still people," Stoll warned, "who, though they do not represent any important power, have become very active during the past three years and have been trying to extend their influence to young people who do not know their past . . . these callous, cunning people . . . show one face to the public and the other—the real one, hostile to Socialism—only to their intimate friends. It is necessary to combat this hypocrisy and to reveal it to all honest people working in the cultural field."

Stoll also attacked the Vatican for "abusing the beliefs of the faithful." Claiming that Communist ideology could not offend anyone's religious feelings, he added: "Dark, criminal, historic forces are trying to turn the religious sentiment of simple individuals against the interests of the people, humanity and peace." (*Rude Pravo* [Prague], June 9.)

Jiri Hendrych, one of the regime's chief ideologists and a member of the Party Politburo, stressed in his speech the fact that the time for repentance had come for those writers "who in 1956 and 1957 lost their way in the boiling life of our renascent society." Although assured

that "the majority of these people have overcome their vacillations of that time," Hendrych reminded them that "once more the comradely hand of the Party extended to them is and will be the safest support."

On display as a classic example of the "repentant writer" was Frantisek Hrubin, one of the leading rebels at the 1956 Congress, who was reported to have said: "Our artists will never betray their people, and we therefore find utterly ridiculous those runaways [refugees] who would so very much like to see an abyss between our writers and Socialist society." (*Rude Pravo*, June 10.)

BULGARIA

Taskov Dismissal Explained

Inability to believe that Bulgaria's "great leap forward" (i.e. fulfillment of the Third Five Year Plan within a shorter time) is wholly realistic seems to have caused the downfall of former Minister of Trade Boris Taskov (see *East Europe*, May, p. 51). An editorial in the Party Central Committee's periodical, *Partien Zivot* (Sofia), No. 6, not only explains why Taskov lost his job, but also implies that other members of the Party may have their own doubts over the current economic policies:

"High principles in Party work are impossible without a strong faith in Party policy for the pre-fulfillment of the Five Year Plan, and without devoted work for its triumph. . . . If we wanted to determine the reasons why Comrade Taskov failed in his work . . . we would find that the most important cause was his lack of conviction in the correctness of our Party policy for the rapid development of our country. . . . Even now there are individuals throughout the

country who continue to work hesitantly and doubtfully for our Party line."

These views were echoed in the theoretical organ of the Party, *Novo Vreme* (Sofia), June:

"It must be stated . . . that mistrust of the correctness and realism of the Party line . . . and misunderstanding of the changes in the country was one of the main reasons why Boris Taskov was unable to cope with his work. . . . Unfortunately there are individual cases in our Party when tested cadres and fearless revolutionaries . . . are now afraid of difficulties and hold back. . . . Some of our comrades have an incorrect attitude toward the question of collectivism. The minority must observe the opinion of the majority."

As a footnote to the Taskov case, the Yugoslav Party organ, *Borba* (Belgrade), June 9, announced that the former Minister was now the director of a factory manufacturing railway carriages in Sofia.

Dimitrov Hailed

On June 17, the 77th anniversary of the birth of Bulgaria's Georgi Dimitrov, famous international revolutionary and "Father of the People's Republic," was celebrated. In a long eulogy in Sofia, Misho Nikolov, a member of the Party Central Committee, conjured up Dimitrov's ghost to champion the greatly accelerated Bulgarian economic program and enlisted him in the campaign against the Yugoslav "revisionists":

"In accordance with the Dimitrov directives that our country must achieve in 15 or 20 years what other countries under different conditions have accomplished in a century, the January plenum of the Central Committee . . . outlined new and unprecedented—but realistic—tempo and scales for the development of all branches of production. . . .

That Which Connects Us With Life

by Mieczyslaw Jastrun

This poem appeared in the Warsaw literary periodical NOWA KULTURA, May 24. Jastrun, along with several other prominent Polish poets, was reported to have resigned from the Party in protest at the constriction of literary liberty.

THAT WHICH suspends us in air, unsure of our strength,
Ready to plunge beneath ourselves at any moment,
That which lifts us, gently, like a child—
Only in childhood was there no force of gravity:
Running took the place of walking, the soul was weightless,
The earth was so pungent, the flower opened
And offered itself wholly.

Expectation remains. It is like air.
I wait for a letter, a telephone call, the end of a sleepless night,
I wait for pavement shadows to gleam with the rains of spring,
I await my son's return from school, the flash of film lights,
I wait for the dust to swirl when the bus rolls by . . .

That which connects us with life is trivial, no bigger than the trinket

Delighting the eyes of the child with its priceless glitter
The fruit struggled to emerge and hunger was a dark creature.

Blinded by misery, I stared round me like a bird
At a tree plucked of its fruit by human beings,
My swollen wind-pipe screaming for naked hope.

Equilibrium forever unsteady, without place or destination.
And yet I must finally settle all this

As best I can in a position not altogether comfortable,
Among things that come to pass in threatened vigilance,
Amid concealed conflagrations, within the unseen jaws of monsters,

In the air-tight confines of atoms, in loneliness, in confusion.

Untidied dawn, frozen light,
Crucified hour, telephone receiver laid aside,
Table without legs, the sunflower's wrenched-off head,
A drawer full of chaos of creation.

Current Developments—Bulgaria, Romania

"Georgi Dimitrov is alive and is victorious in our country's nationwide movement for the fulfillment of the Third Five Year Plan ahead of schedule."

Referring to the struggle against revisionism, Nikolov quoted Dimitrov as teaching that "the victory of the new Socialist regime does not come about spontaneously, as the contemporary revisionists are trying to prove, but is the result of vast organizational work by the Communist Party and the Socialist State." (Radio Sofia, June 17.)

Conspicuously omitted was any reference to the agreements "for Friendship and Mutual Assistance" concluded between Dimitrov and Yugoslav President Tito in 1947 and later denounced by Bulgaria after Dimitrov's death in 1949. Yugoslavia, however, was quick to remind people that Dimitrov had been "one of the greatest supporters of Bulgarian-Yugoslav friendship" and one who struggled against "Bulgarian chauvinism." (Radio Belgrade, June 20.)

In reaction to the Yugoslav claims on Dimitrov, a broadcast over Radio Sofia, July 2, called Dimitrov "an implacable fighter against revisionism," one who had "severely condemned Yugoslav nationalism, especially their chauvinism with regard to the Macedonian problem . . . yet those same people . . . against whom Dimitrov waged a merciless struggle are trying to speculate with his name and to distort his thoughts."

ROMANIA

Reform in Education

In another move towards "polytechnicism" (i.e. on-the-job training), *Scinteia* (Bucharest), June 11, announced that in the elementary schools (ages 7-14) academic courses next year will be reduced and more "practical" courses will be required (see also *East Europe*, June, pp. 46, 48). *Scinteia* commented as follows on the new program: "Taking into consideration the fact that . . . the majority of graduates will have to enter industrial and agricultural production, it is necessary that pupils receive an education required by their future activities in life."

Hungarian-Romanian Universities Merge

The unification of the Hungarian and Romanian Universities of Cluj in Transylvania (which contains most of Romania's Hungarian minority), has finally been concluded, according to Radio Bucharest, June 3. Earlier this year at the Congress of Students' Associations, a proposal to abolish separate minority schools was made (see *East Europe*, April, p. 55). Some of the ostensible reasons for the merger were revealed at a meeting of teachers from the two Cluj institutions, described in *Rominia Libera* (Bucharest), July 3. According to this article, the unification will result in the "development of the spirit of patriotism and Socialist internationalism, and consolidation of the brotherhood existing between the Romanian people and the national minorities." The teachers promised to fight



Young Pioneers march in Wenceslas Square, Prague, celebrating the tenth anniversary of the Czechoslovak Communist children's organization.

Photo from *Svet v Obrazech* (Prague), July 4, 1959

against "any manifestations of nationalism and chauvinism."

Professor Lajos Takacs at this same gathering averred that in some cases the minority language will be preserved: "A great number of courses will be taught in both Ro-

manian and Hungarian. For example, mathematics, physics, chemistry, history, philosophy, natural sciences and social sciences. . . . In all faculties the courses in Romanian history and geography will be in Romanian."

Shortly before the merger was officially announced, *Romania Libera*, June 30, stressed the fact that the impending unification would not affect the cultural life of the Hungarian minority, i.e. Hungarian-language theaters and newspapers, etc. The merger doubtless represents a further attempt by the regime to mitigate unrest—of which there have been reports since the Hungarian Revolt—among Hungarian youth in Romania.

Poets Under Fire

"Remoteness from reality destroys poetic value"—this was the *leitmotiv* of an attack against young Romanian poets, published in the organ of the youth union, *Scinteia Tineretului* (Bucharest), June 17. Poet Ion Rahoveanu was criticized for his "sterile mysticism"; poets Miron Scorobete, Dumitru Căpanaru and I. Tîrlea wasted "an abundance of symbols and metaphors on sterile mannerisms, profoundly alien to the rhythm of Socialist life, since their erudite, pretentious and modernistic poetry is wholly useless to a young generation heroically fighting for Socialism." Corneliu Serban was also condemned for writing "empty verbiage and bombast."

Social Insurance Programs in Eastern Europe

(Continued from page 11)

approaching even the average worker's wage, which, as stated earlier, was estimated in 1958 at approximately 1,300 *koruny* per month. Under the present laws, it is perfectly conceivable for a self-employed person to receive a pension of 210 *koruny* a month— $\frac{1}{6}$ of a worker's average wage—and have no free medical care accorded him.

Nevertheless, with inexorable regularity the Communist regimes publish figures intended to demonstrate to one and all the great social benefits enjoyed by the people under a "Socialist" system of government. *Rude Pravo*, March 18, 1959, for example, in a discussion of the State budget for that year, boasted: "The report [on the budget] states without any pompous phrases that 40 percent of the entire expenditure of the State budget for 1959 refers to cultural and social measures. This 40 percent represents 38.4 billion *koruny* which our society allocates to education . . . social security of the working people . . . treatment in spas and sanatoria. . . . By these facts we can easily demonstrate the greatness and immense importance of what we call social consumption [and] the extent of care bestowed on individuals in our State."

What is not explained, however, is the fact that many social benefits are denied to large segments of the population, and that, in fact, the social insurance programs are designed in great measure as weapons in the "class struggle" and "kulaks." Yet, paradoxically, the discriminatory tactics used by the regime to eliminate certain classes may lead to an eventual lessening of discrimination. For example, between 1950 and 1957, the number of self-employed persons fell by 819,895 (Box, p. 9). Although this

did not occur solely because certain social insurance benefits were denied to these people, undoubtedly the pressures applied by the regime in the area of social welfare forced many of them to enter a nationalized sector of the economy. Once considered as employees of the State, they become eligible for Health Insurance benefits and increased Social Security coverage. Nevertheless, due to the rules affecting uninterrupted length of employment in the same enterprise and the fact that time spent as a self-employed worker is usually discounted in assessing the amount of the benefit, undue strain on the budget can often be avoided, although at the expense of the aged and unwell. As it is now practiced, then, the increasing "Socialization" of the State will result in incorporating an even larger part of the population in social insurance programs.

Even when this occurs, however, benefits will probably continue to be paid according to the quantity, quality and social importance of the work rather than to the need of the insured. Since the regime rather than the individual decides on the amount of coverage accorded each person, the new ruling class is reinforced in its position and the social insurance benefits remain dependent on the place the individual is assigned in the Communist hierarchy. Stripped of any alternatives, the individual is at the mercy of the regime: a prolonged illness can mean virtual starvation, and what has been hailed by the Communist State as a humanitarian program for "all citizens" becomes a vindictive method of crushing the non-conforming individual.

(To Be Continued)

contribute to the achievement of positive results at the Geneva Conference of Foreign Ministers and to the creation of a favorable atmosphere for further negotiations. It expresses the hope that the States will do nothing in the near future to further aggravate and deteriorate the present atmosphere for negotiations between West and East. A policy of *fait accompli* would deepen even further existing conflicts and thus delay or prevent the attainment of any agreement.

The Czechoslovak Government expects these suggestions will be received with full understanding and that they will be supported by all States and the world public and that they will result in definite measures for the benefit of further negotiations, for easing international tension and for improving the international atmosphere.

ALBANIAN STATEMENT ON BALKANS

ONE OF THE principal policy objectives of the Albanian People's Republic today as always is the transformation of the Balkan-Adriatic nations into a peacefully coexisting group. Efforts to obtain this objective, which is in the vital interests of all the people of this region and of general peace, are well-known. Identical efforts are also being made by other States devoted to peace.

It must be admitted that lately the situation in this region has entered a new phase of aggravation because of the policy of cold war and the aggressive preparations of the NATO bloc, initiated by the United States. The installation of U S bases for atomic weapons and rockets on Italian territory and the efforts to establish similar bases on Greek territory have caused anxiety among the peoples of the Balkans and Adriatic. These factors have brought the danger of atomic war with all its horrible consequences nearer this zone.

The Albanian People's Republic Government, as is known, had made firm representations to the Governments of Italy and Greece, that, in the interests of their peoples and of peace, they should not embark on this dangerous and deadly road. The opinion of the Albanian Government is that at present the essential and most pressing task of all the Governments of the States of this area is to coordinate their efforts to prevent . . . atomic war in the Balkans and Adriatic.

During the visit to the Albanian People's Republic by the delegation of the Communist Party and Government of the Soviet Union, headed by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and president of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, N. S. Khrushchev, in the speeches of the head of the Soviet delegation and of the leaders of the Albanian Workers' Party and the Albanian Government, as well as in the joint Albanian-Soviet declaration of May 30, 1959, the danger constituted by US atomic weapon and rocket bases in Italy and efforts made to establish such bases in Greece to the peoples of the Balkans and Mediterranean basin, was again underlined.

Both parties expressed their determination to do everything possible to avert this danger. Simultaneously, having in mind that these bases are created with aggressive aims against the Albanian People's Republic, the USSR and the other Socialist countries, and threaten their security, the Albanian and Soviet Governments have publicly declared they would take appropriate measures to defend the security of the Albanian People's Republic and the entire Socialist camp from this threat.

Taking into consideration the supreme interest of all peoples and of general peace, and in order to ward off this dangerous course of events, N. S. Khrushchev, during his stay in Albania, proposed the creation of a zone of peace without atomic weapons and rockets in the Balkans and Adriatic. The Government of Albania immediately welcomed and approved this proposal, declaring itself ready to start talks with all interested governments so that the Balkans and Adriatic, the whole region of the Mediterranean, be transformed into a zone of peace and friendship free from atomic weapons and rockets.

Dealing with the Balkans, the joint Albanian-Soviet declaration notes that renunciation of atomic weapons and rocket bases on their territories by the countries of this region would be a great contribution to the cause of transforming the Balkans into a zone of peace. . .

This constructive initiative met with very favorable reaction among the peoples of this region and other peace-loving peoples. Supporting N. S. Khrushchev's proposal concerning the creation of an atom-free zone in the Balkans and Mediterranean basin, the Romanian Government, in its declaration of June 6, 1959, expressed the wish that these proposals be supported by all Governments of the interested countries.

Simultaneously, the Romanian Government proposed the convocation of a meeting of heads of Balkan States to arrive at a collective agreement assuring peace in this region for the good of the Balkan peoples. On the same occasion a treaty of understanding and mutual security might be concluded between these States which, among other things, would transform the Balkans into a zone free of atomic weapons and rockets.

Meeting for "Peace"

The Albanian Government unreservedly supports the Romanian Government's proposal and expresses a desire to participate in such a meeting. In the view of the Albanian Government, the development of the international situation, and especially of events in the Balkan and Adriatic region, makes the meeting proposed by the Romanian Government very timely and indispensable.

It would play a positive role in creating an atmosphere of understanding and sincere collaboration between the Balkan countries in a spirit of neighborliness, equality, noninterference, respect and mutual benefit, and would contribute greatly to easing international tensions.

In the past the Balkan peoples have shed blood, have endured suffering and innumerable sacrifices because of interventions and the aggressive policy of the imperialist powers. The victory of Socialism in a certain number of Balkan States and the new increase of world forces favoring peace and progress, have brought an end to the period when the Balkans were a powder keg, and have opened a new era—an era of peace and friendship, of understanding and collaboration.

The Balkan peoples have learned a lesson from history and will no longer permit the imperialist powers to transform the Balkans into an inferno of atomic war. They will fight so that, in the Balkans and Mediterranean basin, there will be no launching ramps or atomic weapons installed. . .

Reaffirming its desire to start talks with all interested Governments with a view to creating a zone free from atomic weapons and rockets in the Balkans and Mediterranean, the Albanian Government expresses the desire that all Governments of the Balkan states adopt a positive attitude toward the Romanian Government's appeal and unite their efforts in arriving at an agreement . . . transforming the Balkans into a zone of peace and friendship, into a powerful factor of security and international understanding.



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